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ABSTRACT

Noting that statewide writing assessment shows the achievements of Oregon students over the last decade, this booklet explains the results for the 1993-1997 assessments and provides papers illustrating the work that Oregon students in grades 3 and 5 produce on the state test. The booklet's chapters are: (1) The History of Writing Assessment in Oregon; (2) The Analytic Models and Highlights of the Assessment Results; (3) The Classroom Connection; and (4) Statewide Results and Sample Student Papers. Appendixes contain: a writing scoring guide; mode scoring guide; sample prompts; guides to revision; student writer's report; requirements for collection of student work samples; conversion tables from 5- to 6-point scale; inter-rater reliability 1996-1997; writing content panel members; and an 18-item annotated bibliography of materials on writing assessment and instruction. (CR)

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Oregon STATEWIDE Writing ASSESSMENT

RESULTS, ANALYSIS, and SAMPLE STUDENT WRITINGS

1993-1997

GRADES 3 & 5

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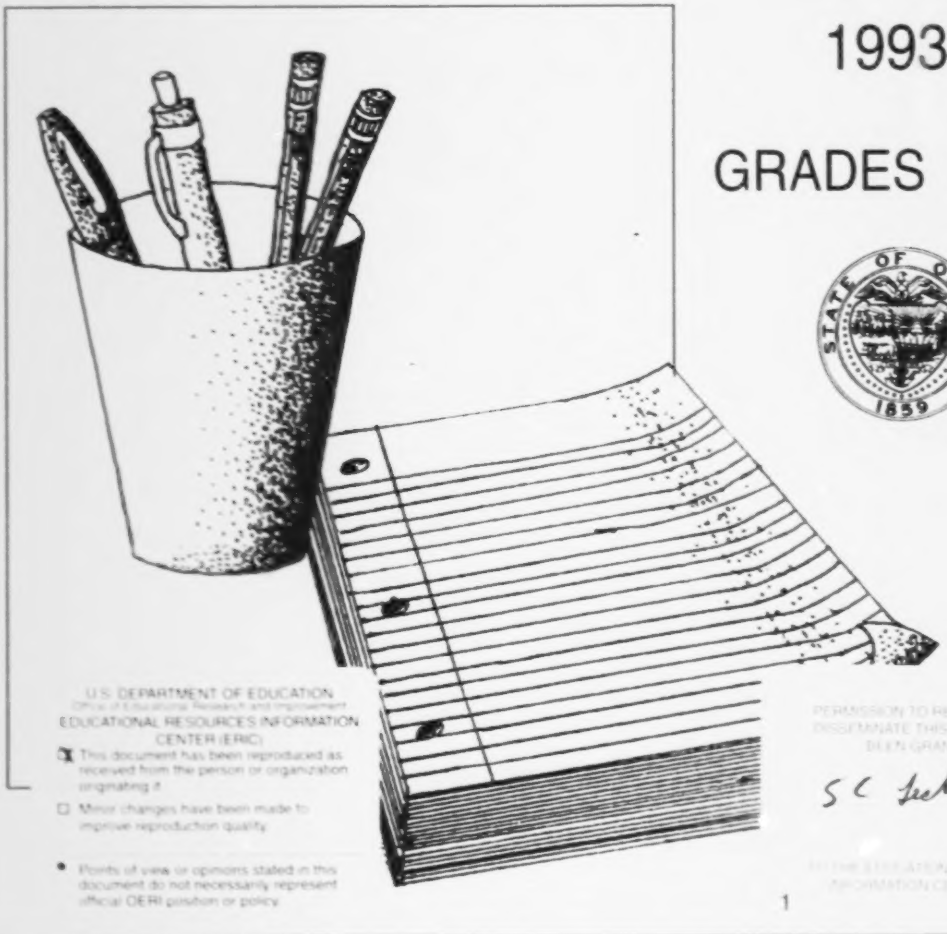

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Norma Paulus, State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Oregon Department of Education, Salem, Oregon

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Oregon Statewide Writing Assessment

1993 to 1997

with Student Writings
Grades 3 and 5

This report was prepared under the direction of

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February 1998

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Many thanks to the Scoring Directors and Assistant Scoring Directors for the Oregon Statewide Writing Assessment who forwarded copies of student papers for use in this report.

This booklet is dedicated to Oregon's students and teachers, who work so hard and with such good spirit to ensure that all students can write effectively.

1859

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Salem, Oregon 97310-0203

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Foreword

Oregon's statewide writing assessment shows the achievements of Oregon students over the last decade. It also gives us a preview of how students are likely to do as they attempt to reach the new higher performance standards adopted as part of Oregon's school improvement efforts.

The writing assessment has been conducted yearly since 1991 (biennially from 1985 - 1991) and the pattern of results over the years is gratifying. This document will explain the results for the 1993 – 1997 assessments and provide papers illustrating the work that Oregon students produce on our state test. I am pleased to point out that average scores for students have shown improvement in almost every trait from year to year.

Oregon is a pioneer in developing an assessment that requires actual student writing and allows students sufficient testing time to produce and revise a fairly lengthy essay. The state is also a leader in providing information to students about their particular strengths and weaknesses on that essay by scoring the writing for six important areas, or traits, of writing. Oregon schools use the summary information about their students to plan curriculum and instruction improvements.

More and more Oregon teachers are making the state's Analytic Trait Writing Assessment part of their daily classroom activity. This report is useful as a summary of state level assessment results and as a staff development tool for teachers. It is a source of examples to share with students and parents in teaching writing or explaining the state test.

I commend Oregon students and teachers for their fine efforts and achievements in the critically important area of writing. And I encourage them to continue and strengthen those efforts so that all students will be able to achieve the writing standards established by the State Board of Education for the Certificate of Initial Mastery and the benchmarks leading to it.

Norma Paulus

Norma Paulus
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: The History of Writing Assessment in Oregon 1

Chapter 2: The Analytic Models and Highlights of Assessment Results 5

- The Six-Trait Analytic Model Summary 5
- Mode Summary 7
- Trends in Writing Scores 1991-1997 9
- Highlights of Results of the Writing Assessment, 1993-1997 11

Chapter 3: The Classroom Connection 15

- The Value of the Scoring Guide 15
- Using the Scoring Guide as an Instructional Tool 15
- Integrating the Statewide Assessment into the Classroom (and Tips for Helping Students Do Their Best) 19

Chapter 4: Statewide Results and Sample Student Papers 21

- Grade 5 22-45
  - Ideas and Content *22*
  - Organization *26*
  - Voice *30*
  - Word Choice *34*
  - Sentence Fluency *38*
  - Conventions *42*

- Grade 3 46-65
  - Ideas and Content *46*
  - Organization *50*
  - Voice *54*
  - Word Choice *57*
  - Sentence Fluency *60*
  - Conventions *63*

Appendices:

A. Writing Scoring Guide: Analytical Traits (including Citing Sources) 68
B. Mode Scoring Guide 75
C. Sample Prompts, Grades 3 and 5 81
D. Guides to Revision, Grades 3 and 5 83
E. Student Writer's Report 84
F. Requirements for Collection of Student Work Samples 85
G. Conversion Tables from Five to Six-point Scoring Scale 86
H. Inter-rater Reliability: 1996 and 1997 87
I. Writing Content Panel Members 88
J. Bibliography: Writing Assessment and Instruction 90

Chapter 1
The History of Writing Assessment in Oregon

The Background: From Indirect to Direct Assessment

Writing assessment has changed significantly during the past twenty years in Oregon and in other parts of the United States. As educators gained new insights about defining and teaching writing, they recognized the value of assessing student writing directly rather than indirectly. For decades, educators attempted to assess student writing through the use of standardized multiple choice tests. They recognized, however, the limited scope of information provided by those indirect assessments; multiple choice items could reveal students' understanding of some issues such as grammar and usage, but effective writing is characterized by qualities that multiple choice items simply cannot address. A richer, more meaningful approach emerged: students were provided with carefully designed, open-ended writing prompts and asked to write in response to those prompts; the writing that resulted was then assessed.

Oregon's First Direct Assessments: 1978-1982

In 1978, Oregon students were asked for the first time to actually produce a sample of original writing to be assessed by trained professionals beyond their school districts. A representative sample of students throughout the state in grades 4, 7, and 11 was assessed; the sample was based on school size, organizational structure, and geographic location. The student writing samples were assessed holistically, meaning that each paper received a single score based on its overall effectiveness. In 1982, another sample of students in grades 4, 7, and 11 participated in a holistic assessment.

Emergence of the Analytic Trait Model: Early 1980's

Teachers of writing during the early 1980's recognized the need for a model of assessment that would enable them to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in their students' writing. The Oregon Department of Education decided in 1985 to score student writing analytically; Oregon educators revised and refined a six-trait analytic scoring guide that had been initially developed by teachers from the Beaverton School District and Portland Public Schools.

In 1985, 1987, and 1989, the department conducted direct assessments of a random sample of several thousand eighth grade students. For the first time, their writing was scored analytically, which meant that each paper received six scores (one each for the traits of Ideas and Content, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions).

Classroom Implications: Sharing the Model with Teachers and Students

During the 1980's, as part of an effort that continues even now, methods and materials were developed in order to share the Analytic Model with teachers and students as both an assessment and an instructional tool in the classroom. Using the scoring guide, students could clearly understand the criteria on which their writing would be scored and could see the goals toward which they were working. They could evaluate their own writing, and peer feedback took on new meaning when students shared the same specific goals and the same vocabulary for discussing each other's work. Used with the writing process, the scoring guide provided a powerful foundation for revision. Support for the analytic approach grew as teachers realized its value in instruction as well as in assessment. (See Chapter 3 for specific instructional uses of the approach in the classroom.)

Growth of the Assessment: 1989-1991

In 1989, the Oregon Legislature funded the Oregon Department of Education's plan to expand the assessment to include all Oregon students in grades 3, 5, 8, and 11. Each student paper, in addition to receiving scores in each of the six analytic traits, would also be scored for effectiveness of writing mode, or purpose. (In the mid-1980's, as Oregon educators developed the Essential Learning Skills, they called for students to demonstrate writing proficiency across the five modes of Narration, Description, Exposition, Persuasion, and Imaginative Writing.) In 1990, ODE conducted a pilot for the expanded assessment. Finally, in 1991, all Oregon students in grades 3, 5, 8, and 11 participated in the assessment. Each of 140,000 papers was read by two trained professionals and assigned a total of seven scores by each rater.

Budget Cutbacks: Smaller Scope of Assessment from 1992-1995

Because of budget constraints, only students in grades 3 and 8 participated in the 1992 Oregon Statewide Writing Assessment. The following year, in 1993, all Oregon students in grades 5 and 11 were assessed. The plan was to assess the two sets of grade levels in alternating years, which did, in fact, occur through 1995.

1991 Education Act Calls for High Writing Standards; State Board Adopts Specific Performance Standards for Certificate of Initial Mastery

With the passage of the Oregon Education Act for the 21st Century, the Oregon Legislature approved specific Performance Standards that students must meet in order to earn a Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM). **Beginning in 1999, in order to qualify for a Certificate of Initial Mastery at grade 10, students must earn scores in the Statewide Writing Assessment of four or higher (on a six-point scale) in the four traits of Ideas and Content, Organization, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions.** Voice and Word Choice, although still scored as part of the assessment and still part of the Common Curriculum Goals, are not part of the Performance Standards. The modes of writing are still evident as part of the required Collection of Work Samples by which a student will demonstrate breadth of writing proficiency, but a mode score will not be assigned as part of the assessment. (See Appendix G for a complete list of the requirements for the Collection of Work Samples.) The decision to exclude scores for Voice, Word Choice, and Mode from the Performance Standards was based on a series of meetings of Focus Groups comprised of educators and community members; these groups felt it was important to narrow the Performance Standards to the most critical writing traits.

The requirements delineated in the Performance Standards changed the focus and shifted the primary purpose of the Oregon Statewide Writing Assessment. The main purpose in the past had been program evaluation at the school and district levels; the reporting of individual student performances was a secondary purpose. With the new legislation, however, reporting reliable individual student scores using an instrument that meets "technical adequacy standards" will be the primary purpose of the assessment.

Implications of the Education Act for the Assessment

Because of the specific Performance Standards outlined as part of the Oregon Education Act for the 21st Century, the stakes are higher for individual students in the writing assessment. The Oregon Department of Education began to prepare for the shift in focus as early as 1993. Changes have included:

- assessments of all Oregon 10th graders every year, beginning in 1996. (It is anticipated that most Oregon students will earn their Certificate Of Initial Mastery at the end of their 10th grade year. In the future, students will be offered several opportunities to take the assessment during the 10th grade year.)
- assessments of all 8th graders every year, beginning in 1996, so that students at that benchmark level will receive feedback about their progress toward the standards.
- assessments of 3rd and 5th graders every other year, so that students at those benchmark levels will receive feedback about their relative strengths and weaknesses in relation to the standards.
- increased choices of writing prompts for students. The assessment has moved from only one prompt on which a student was required to write during the early years, to a choice of two prompts within the same mode in 1992, to a choice of three prompts, each in a different mode, in 1996. Every effort is made to ensure that students will have an opportunity to demonstrate proficient writing.
- a clarification in the directions for administering the assessment that students be allowed as much time as necessary to write their papers, even though three 45-minute class periods are suggested as a reasonable time frame.
- adoption of a six-point scoring scale in 1995, rather than the five-point scale used previously. The reason was to allow more differentiation among the middle scores and to align with other state scoring guides.
- refinements of the scoring guide based upon years of application to hundreds of thousands of papers in order to clarify both expectations for students and scoring criteria for raters during the assessment. Since students must achieve minimal scores of four to earn a Certificate Of Initial Mastery, the descriptors that differentiate a score of three from a score of four have received particularly close attention.
- a continued emphasis on inter-rater reliability, which has risen each year. (Inter-rater reliability refers to the occurrence of reliability between the two raters of a given paper, meaning that their scores, assigned in "blind" readings, are no more than one point apart.) In 1997, the state average inter-rater reliability rate among all seventeen scoring sites with over 1,000 raters was 96 percent. The training of raters includes a qualifying or consensus process to help ensure reliability.

Additional Goal of Assessment: Put Scoring in Hands of Oregon Teachers

It has always been a goal of the assessment to put scoring in the hands of Oregon classroom teachers. The assessment has moved steadily in that direction, beginning with just one Oregon scoring site in Portland, with most of the papers scored by Data Recognition Systems in Minnesota. In 1993 there were three Oregon scoring sites, in 1994 there were nine, in 1995 there were thirteen, in 1996 there were sixteen, and in 1997 there were seventeen. Beginning in 1994, all papers were scored within the state, primarily by classroom teachers. Teachers who have participated say they have found the experience one of the best staff development activities of their careers, and almost all have found that their teaching of writing is profoundly affected when they return to their classrooms.

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Current Assessment Procedures

As of 1997, Oregon students participating in the writing assessment were asked to produce a substantive piece of writing over the course of three days (i.e., three class periods) during a window of time in February. They were asked to write in response to one of three open-ended writing prompts, each designed to elicit a different mode of writing (i.e., narrative, expository, persuasive, or imaginative). Directions for the assessment encouraged students to use a writing process: a pre-write, a first draft, and a final draft. A Student Guide to Revision was included, and students were directed to use the guide as they read over their drafts (see Appendix C for the Guide to Revision). Students were instructed to write their final drafts on two pages provided in a test booklet. They were also asked to complete a survey when they finished their final drafts (See Chapter 2 for results of the survey).

The student writing samples were scored during March of 1997 at 17 sites around the state by trained teams of raters (over 1,000 in all), most of them full-time classroom teachers. Most teams at each site were comprised of about 50 percent experienced raters and 50 percent new raters. The goal is to keep expanding the numbers of raters so that they can go back to their classrooms with new understandings about student writing, the scoring guide, and the assessment itself.

Results were returned to school districts before the end of the academic year. Individual student results were included (see Appendix D for a sample Student Report) as well as tables of both classroom and district results. Teachers are encouraged to have mini-conferences with students to help interpret individual results and to help students place the results in the larger context of their relative strengths and weaknesses exhibited throughout the year. (See Chapter 3 for suggestions about how to integrate the assessment into classroom practices.)

Statewide Writing Assessment Only Part of a Student's Demonstration of Writing Proficiency

Oregon's legislation clearly requires students to perform well on the Statewide Writing Assessment in order to earn a Certificate Of Initial Mastery. However, it is important for students, teachers, and parents to remember that the assessment represents an "on-demand performance task" that is not meant to represent the full scope of a student's writing abilities. Rather, it is a "snapshot" of what a student can do with a particular prompt on a particular day. While it is important to be able to write "on-demand" with proficiency in the everyday world, people ordinarily have the opportunity to get feedback from others when writing something of importance, and to have access to the advantages of technology. Hence, the writing assessment is only part of Oregon's Assessment Model. Students also must make a collection of other evidence of their writing proficiency. Together, these pieces can demonstrate the breadth and depth of a student's abilities. (See Appendix G for a list of requirements for the Collection of Work Samples.)

Chapter 2
The Analytic Models and Highlights of Results of the Assessment, 1993-1997

Six-trait Analytic Model Summary

The Oregon Analytic Scoring Model is comprised of six traits. The complete scoring guide, with full descriptors at each of the six score points, is printed as Appendix A. Here, however, are brief descriptions of the six traits.

- **Ideas and Content**

The trait of Ideas and Content addresses the point of the writer's message, or main theme, along with all the supporting details that develop and enrich that theme. **Writing that meets the standard** is clear and focused with an easily identifiable purpose. Main ideas are communicated clearly and are supported by relevant details that provide evidence of an adequate exploration of the topic. When the topic or assignment calls for it, outside resources are used to provide accurate support (this would apply to classroom assignments only, not the statewide assessment, during which students do not have access to outside resources). **Writing that exceeds the standard** also provides evidence of making connections and sharing insights; writing at this level often includes the kinds of details readers would not ordinarily anticipate or predict. These writers notice the extraordinary or unusual that others overlook. In addition, the writing is controlled, details seem to have been carefully selected for audience and purpose, and, when appropriate, the use of resources provides strong, accurate, credible support.

- **Organization**

The trait of Organization gets at the structure of a piece of writing, including the thread of central meaning and the patterns that hold the piece together. Writers may choose from among many possible structures, such as a chronological sequence of events, comparison-contrast, deductive logic, point-by-point analysis, or others. The goal is an effective, graceful fit with the topic, however, rather than a formulaic, stilted organization that seems to have been superimposed upon the writing. **Writing that meets the standard** for this trait is coherent, with a developed beginning and body, as well as a sense of resolution or closure at the end. Transitions move the reader clearly from one point to the next. **Writing that exceeds the standard** begins in an interesting and meaningful way, creating in the reader a sense of expectation and anticipation. Transitions from one idea to the next are smooth and well-crafted, and a satisfying sense of resolution ends the piece.

- **Voice** (no minimum required score to earn a Certificate of Initial Mastery)

Voice reflects the distance between writers and their topics, and between writers and their audiences. A skilled writer understands when it is appropriate to establish a more objective or academic distance from a topic (e.g., when writing a report as a witness to an accident, or when writing a formal academic paper utilizing outside resources and appropriate citations). A skilled writer also recognizes when it is effective to establish a more personal rapport with an audience (e.g., when writing a personal narration or in certain kinds of fiction). Regardless, most writing can and should be made interesting, and a writer's interest in and commitment to a topic can be discerned even in non-fiction, for example. Strong writing is characterized by a sense that the topic has come to life; it may show liveliness, originality, conviction, sincerity, humor, or suspense.

- **Word Choice** (no minimum required score to earn a CIM)

Word Choice reflects the degree to which a writer has used specific words and phrases to convey the intended message in an interesting, precise, and natural way. Strong writers use a broad range of accurate, specific words that energize the writing; they may use figurative language or vocabulary that is striking, but it sounds natural and is not overdone. More often, a broad range of everyday words is used in a fresh and accurate way to create clear images, to provide cogent explanations, or to move the reader. If slang is used, it seems purposeful and is effective. Clichés and overused expressions are avoided.

- **Sentence Fluency**

The trait of Sentence Fluency addresses the rhythm and flow of language, the sound of word patterns, and the variety of sentence structures and beginnings that please the ear if read aloud. Fluent writing is characterized by an ease of movement, free of awkward word patterns that slow or confuse a reader. **Writing that meets the standard** has a natural sound; a reader can move easily through the piece, although it may lack a certain rhythm and grace. Readers like variety, and, at this level, some variety of sentence length, structures, and beginnings is evident. **Writing that exceeds the standard** is more fluid, with an easy rhythm; sentences seem to have been carefully crafted with a strong and interesting variety of lengths, structures, and beginnings. (Sentence Fluency is not a required part of the standard at the third grade benchmark.)

- **Conventions**

Conventions is the trait that encompasses the mechanics of writing: punctuation, spelling, paragraph breaks (indenting), capitalization, grammar and usage. Control of conventions is essential for clear and effective communication, and **writing that meets the standard** for this trait demonstrates that control: correct end-of-sentence punctuation, correct spelling of everyday words, sound paragraph breaks, correct capitalization. Errors at the standard level are minor and, while perhaps noticeable, do not impede readability, distort meaning, or confuse the reader. **Writing that exceeds the standard** demonstrates strong control over a wide range of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece; for example, more sophisticated types of punctuation are used, spelling even of difficult words is correct, and errors are both few and minor. (Neither handwriting nor neatness are considerations in assigning a score for conventions.)

The Six-point Scoring Scale

Student work produced for the Writing Assessment is scored using a six-point scale. Although the Scoring Guide is comprised of specific descriptors for each score point (see Appendix A), each score point can also be framed in a more global perspective.

Score of 6: Exemplary
Writing at this level is both exceptional and memorable. It is often characterized by distinctive and unusually sophisticated problem-solving approaches.

Score of 5: Strong
Writing at this level exceeds the standard. It is thorough, complex, and consistently portrays exceptional control of content and skills.

Score of 4: Proficient
Writing at this level meets the standard. It is strong, solid work that has many more strengths than weaknesses. The writing demonstrates mastery of skills and reflects considerable care and commitment.

Score of 3: Developing
Writing at this level shows basic, but inconsistent mastery and application of content and skills. It shows some strengths but tends to have more weaknesses overall.

Score of 2: Emerging
Writing at this level is often superficial, fragmented, or incomplete. It may show a partial mastery of content and skills, but it needs considerable development before reflecting the proficient level of performance.

Score of 1: Beginning
Writing at this level is minimal. It typically portrays a lack of understanding and use of appropriate skills and strategies. Writing at this level may contain major errors.

Mode Summary

Until 1996, student papers for the Oregon Statewide Writing Assessment were assigned a score for mode in addition to scores for each of the six analytic traits. ("Mode" indicates the primary purpose for the piece of writing: to describe something, to recount a personal experience, to explain something, to persuade, or to write fiction.) When the major purpose for the writing assessment was program evaluation, the main intent of the mode scores was for schools and districts to look for patterns in student results to help ensure that students across the state were being afforded opportunities to write in different modes and were receiving direct instruction in different modes. For example, if tenth graders in a given school consistently scored low in imaginative writing, teachers might ask themselves if students were given enough opportunities to write short fiction; if third graders consistently scored low in expository writing, a school might examine its curriculum and classroom practices to see if there were adequate instruction in exposition.

As the primary purpose of the assessment is shifting to individual student results and demonstration of writing proficiency, however, the mode score has been eliminated. It is still essential that students be able to write in a variety of modes, but this breadth in their skills will be reflected in their Collections of Evidence, usually in the form of a portfolio, which will at the CIM level include at least five pieces of writing generated at the classroom level in addition to the Writing Assessment. The State Board of Education approved specific Performance Standards that require certain modes to appear in student Collections of Evidence.

Students will still need direct instruction in the modes, then, and the Mode Scoring Guide has been recently refined and revised. The complete guide is included as Appendix B; what follows here is a brief summary of each mode. (One additional change has been that the mode of Description was eliminated; descriptive writing seems to occur most frequently in the context of other modes, rather than in isolation.)

The writing prompts for the assessment itself will still be constructed to elicit writing in a particular mode, even though a mode score will not be assigned. Students will have a choice of three prompts, each in a different mode. (See Appendix C for sample prompts in each mode at grades 3 and 5.)

- **Narrative**

Narrative writing recounts a personal experience based on something that really happened. The paper has a clear, identifiable storyline that is easy to recognize, follow, and paraphrase. All details work together in an integrated way to create a complete story with a beginning, a middle, and an end. There is a focus with a controlling idea, central impression, sense of change, or something learned or gained by the writer. Events move along, staying within that focus, with some sort of a narrative structure, often chronological. (For purposes of assessment, Narrative is distinguished from Imaginative writing in that Narrative is based on real-life experiences, whereas Imaginative is meant to be fiction.)

- **Expository**

Expository writing provides information, explains, clarifies, or defines. The writing informs or amplifies the reader's understanding through a carefully crafted presentation of key points, explanations, and supportive detail. The writing contains clear ideas that are focused and fully explained. When appropriate, the writer has utilized a variety of credible resources to gather accurate, relevant information that provides a strong base of support in the form of facts, examples, illustrations, incidents, or explanations. Strong writers show a concern for audience and purpose by carefully selecting words, elaborative detail, and stylistic devices; they also recognize that greater stylistic distance may be required in a formal, academic paper than in an informal, personal paper, but that expository writing can be lively, engaging, and indicative of the writer's commitment to the topic.

- **Persuasive**

Persuasive writing attempts to convince the reader to agree with a particular point of view and/or to persuade the reader to take specific action. The topic must be debatable: there are clearly reasons for more than one point of view. Persuasive writing differs from expository in that it does more than explain; the writer also takes a stand and endeavors to persuade the reader to take that same stand. Strong persuasive writers support their clearly stated position with reasoned arguments supported by credible evidence, facts, anecdotes, and statistics; if used, emotional appeals are well-balanced by these and other objective forms of documentation. Strong writers also address other points of view, but acknowledge or counter points without seeming to shift positions. When a specific audience has been identified, the nature of the arguments and the style of presentation are designed to appeal to that audience.

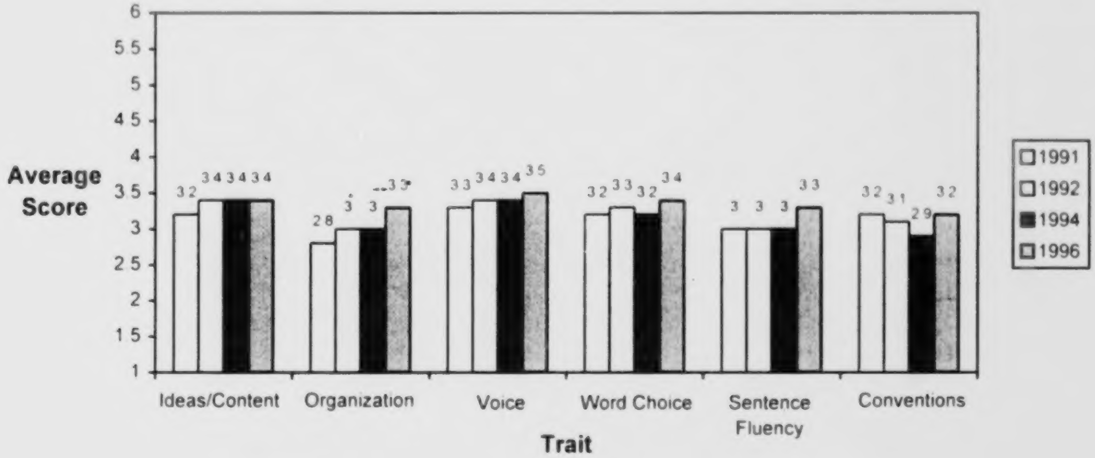
- **Imaginative**

Imaginative writing invents a situation or story based upon the writer's imagination. The writer might create a scene, situation, and character(s), might predict what could happen under hypothetical circumstances, or might solve a hypothetical problem using a creative approach. Imaginative writing often, but not always, takes the form of a short story. In some of the most effective imaginative writing, the writer uses his or her knowledge of the world, people or situations to make the situation or story seem realistic, but, as in all fictional writing, the writer is not bound by the constraints of reality. Imaginative writing may contain elements of fantasy; the key question, however, is not how fantastic it is, but how inventive it is. Strong imaginative writing may contain, as appropriate, insight, drama, humor, the unusual, the unexpected, or suspense. Reader reactions often range from a sense of being challenged or intrigued to a sense of feeling delighted or amused.

Trends in Writing Scores 1991-1997

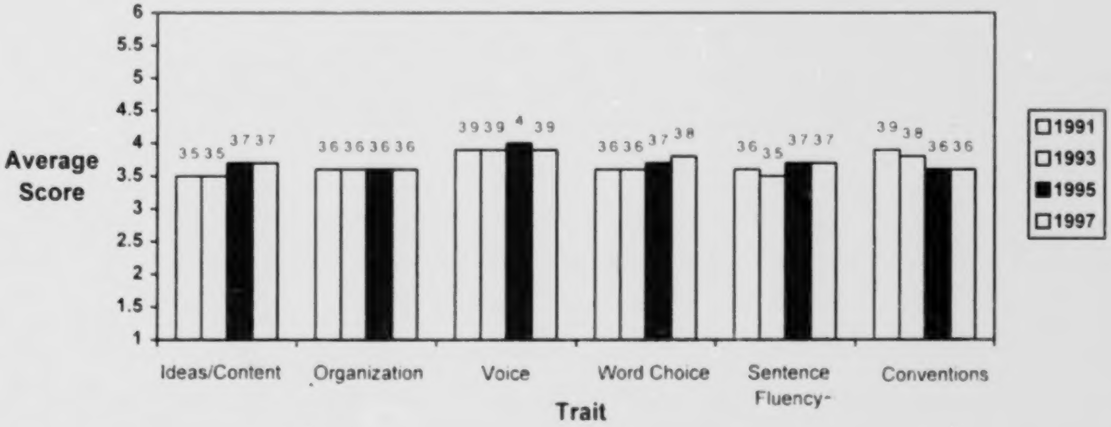
Third grade students' writing has improved in comparison to 1991 in all traits except Conventions, where it remains the same. As the chart below shows, average scores for organization increased steadily, moving from 2.8 in 1991 to 3.3 in 1996. Grade 3 was not assessed in writing in 1997.

Grade 3 Equated Writing Means (6 point scale)



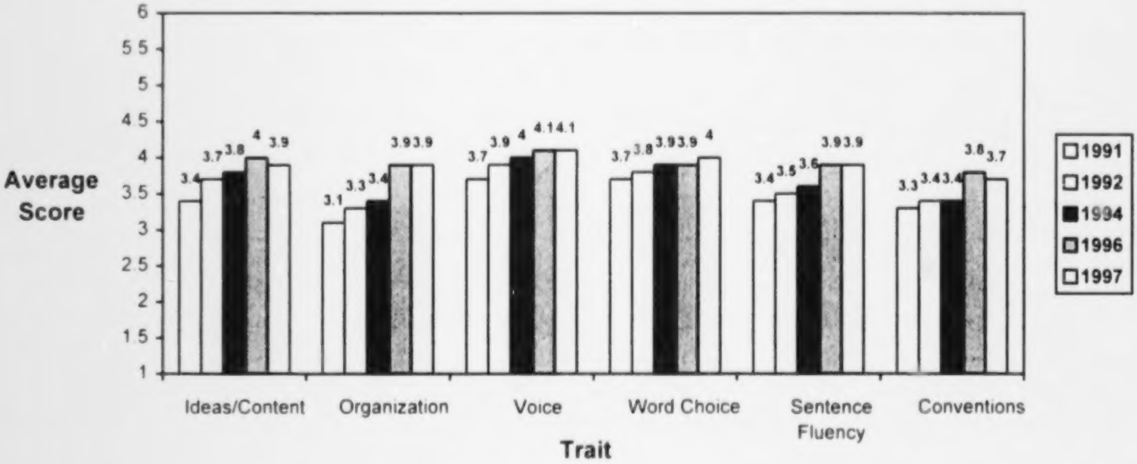
At grade 5, writing performance since 1991 has improved in the traits of Ideas/Content, Voice, Word Choice, and Sentence Fluency. Average scores have remained the same for Organization, and declined for Conventions.

Grade 5 Equated Writing Means (6 point scale)



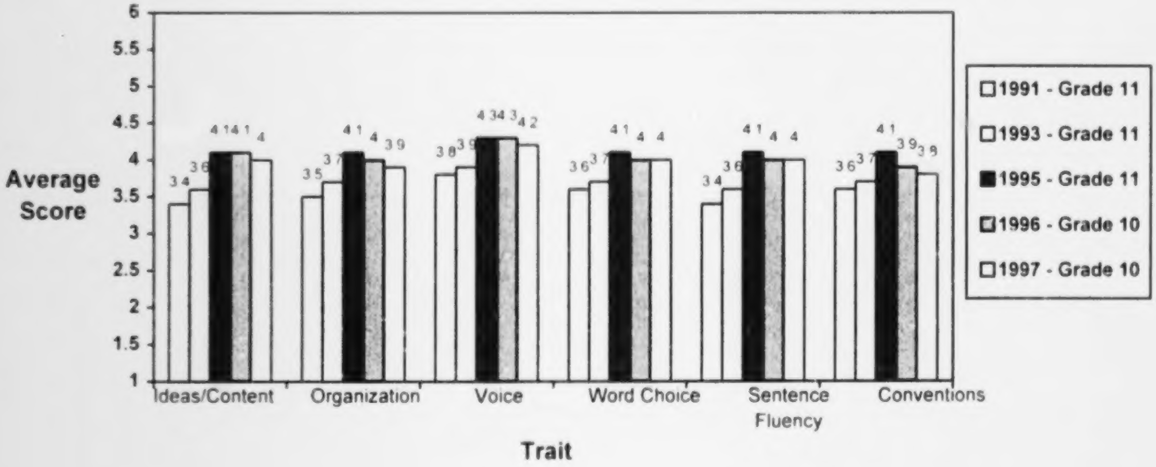
Eighth grade students' writing has improved in all traits since 1991, with greatest gains seen for Ideas/Content and Organization. Average scores in Ideas/Content and Conventions declined slightly from 1996 to 1997. All-time highs were set or equaled in 1997 in the traits of Organization, Voice, Word Choice and Sentence Fluency.

Grade 8 Equated Writing Means (6 point scale)



Students at the high school level have improved their writing in all traits since 1991. In 1996 and 1997 the writing assessment took place at grade 10 instead of grade 11. Performance of tenth graders in those two years was only slightly lower than that of 1995's eleventh graders.

Grades 10 and 11 Equated Writing Means (6 point scale)



Highlights of the Results of the Writing Assessment, 1993-1997

1993: Grades 5 and 11 (scored on a five-point scale)

- As in 1991 and 1992, the assessment provided evidence that Oregon students are strong writers. The performance of 11th grade students, in particular, improved noticeably from the last time they had been assessed in 1991.

- The percentage of students in **Grade 11** who scored a 4 or a 5 increased seven to nine percentage points in all six traits.

- Students in **Grade 11** also improved dramatically (fifteen percentage points or more) in the modes of Descriptive, Narrative, and Imaginative writing while maintaining strong performances in the Expository and Persuasive modes.

- The percentage of students in **Grade 5** who scored a 3 or higher was about the same as the last time they were assessed in 1991, but fewer students scored a 4 or 5 in the traits of Word Choice, Sentence Fluency and Conventions.

- Students in **Grade 5** improved in the modes of Descriptive and Imaginative writing.

- Scores in the trait of Organization for students in both **Grades 5 and 11** continued to be relatively low. Student performance in this trait continued to be lower than in all other traits. A similar pattern existed in previous assessments among students in Grades 3 and 8.

- When asked on a survey to respond to the question, "How much do you usually like to write?" about 73 percent of students in **Grade 5** responded "very much" or "somewhat" while about 69 percent of students in **Grade 11** did.

1994: Grades 3 and 8 (scored on a five-point scale)

- In general, students maintained or extended gains in writing observed since 1991 and 1992. (At both grade levels, the 1992 scores had improved in nearly all traits and modes over the 1991 scores.)

- The average trait scores for students in **Grade 3** were unchanged from 1992, with the exception of the score for Conventions, which declined from 3.1 to 2.9.

- Mode scores for students in **Grade 3** improved in four out of the five modes (Descriptive, Expository, Persuasive, and Imaginative), as indicated by the percent of students scoring at the 4 and 5 levels.

- Students in **Grade 8** improved their average scores in all six traits compared to 1992 levels.

- Mode scores for students in **Grade 8** improved in Descriptive, Expository, Narrative, and Persuasive, but were slightly lower in the Imaginative mode.

1995: Grades 5 and 11 (scored on a six-point scale)

- Students in both **Grades 5 and 11** showed improvement in nearly all traits and modes.
- In all six traits, at least three-fourths of the scores for students in **Grade 11** were in the upper ranges of 4, 5, or 6.
- In Ideas and Content, 35 percent of all students in **Grade 11** scored a 5 or a 6.
- In Conventions, students in **Grade 11** demonstrated a significant gain of .5 over the average score in 1993.
- Nearly 60 percent of students in **Grade 5** scored 4 or higher across all six traits.
- In Ideas and Content, 20 percent of students in **Grade 5** scored a 5 or a 6.

1996: Grades 3, 8, and 10 (scored on a six-point scale)

- Students in **Grade 3**, who were last assessed in 1994, improved significantly in the traits of Organization (progressing from an average score of 3.0 in 1994 to 3.3 in 1996); Sentence Fluency (from 3.0 to 3.3); and Conventions (from 2.9 to 3.2).
- **Third graders** held steady in Ideas and Content (3.4), improved somewhat in Voice (3.4 to 3.5), and in Word Choice (3.2 to 3.4).
- The state standard for **Grade 3** will be a score of 3.0 in the traits of Ideas and Content, Organization, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions. Third graders in 1996 achieved an average score of at least 3.2 in each of those traits (and in the other two of Voice and Word Choice as well).
- Students in **Grade 8** were also last assessed in 1994. In 1996 they achieved significantly higher average scores in the traits of Organization (from 3.4 in 1994 to 3.9 in 1996); Sentence Fluency (from 3.6 to 3.9); and Conventions (3.4 to 3.8).
- Students in **Grade 8** improved also in Ideas and Content (3.8 to 4.0); Voice (4.0 to 4.1); and scored the same in Word Choice (3.9).
- The state standard for **Grade 8** will be a score of 4.0 in the traits of Ideas and Content, Organization, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions. As a group, eighth graders scored an average of 4.0 in the trait of Ideas and Content. Average scores for the other three critical traits fell below the standard that will be expected in 1999 (3.9 in Organization, 3.9 in Sentence Fluency, and 3.8 in Conventions). However, eighth graders made significant improvement since 1994 in each of the critical four traits.
- 1996 was the first year **10th graders** were assessed. As of 1999, they also will be expected to score at least a 4.0 in the traits of Ideas and Content, Organization, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions to earn a Certificate of Initial Mastery. The average scores of students in Grade 10 were at or above the standard in all traits except Conventions, in which they scored a 3.9.
- Compared to 11th graders assessed in 1995, the **10th graders** of 1996 compared favorably. Their average scores were exactly the same for Ideas and Content (4.1) and Voice (4.3). In

the traits of Organization, Word Choice and Sentence Fluency, they scored one-tenth of a point below the 11th graders, and in Conventions two-tenths of a point below.

- Percentages of all **10th graders** who scored 4's, 5's and 6's for each trait were as follows: 77 percent in Ideas and Content; 75 percent in Organization; 84 percent in Voice; 77 percent in Word Choice; 76 percent in Sentence Fluency; and 67 percent in Conventions.

1997: Grades 5, 8, and 10 (scored on a six-point scale)

- Students in **Grade 5** improved slightly in Word Choice, declined slightly in Voice and equaled previous high statewide average scores for the writing traits of Ideas/Content, Organization and Sentence Fluency. The use of Writing Conventions remained the same as when fifth graders were last tested in 1995.

- Students in **Grade 8** also showed improvement in Word Choice, while maintaining previous highs in the writing traits of Organization, Voice and Sentence Fluency. Scores in Ideas and Content and Conventions each declined one-tenth of a point.

- Students in **Grade 10** maintained previous highs in the traits of Sentence Fluency and Word Choice. Overall averages in Ideas and Content and Voice remained at or above the standard of 4. Scores in Organization and Conventions each declined one-tenth of a point from 1996.

- Percentages of all **10th graders** who scored 4's, 5's and 6's for each trait were as follows: 75 percent in Ideas and Content; 72 percent in Organization; 85 percent in Voice; 79 percent in Word Choice; 75 percent in Sentence Fluency; and 66 percent in Conventions.

Comparison of the **Student Survey** results from **1996** and **1997 (Grade 10)**:

	1996	**1997**
What kind of prewriting did you do for this paper?		
• Listing words or outlining	21%	
• Clustering or webbing	17%	
• Freewriting / quickwrite	63%	
• Talking with a friend or family member outside of class	7%	
• Something different from the things listed	21%	
Which of these things did you do in revising your rough draft?		
• I took some things out or put more information in	64%	
• I moved things around	35%	
• I found a better way to say something	68%	
• I edited for spelling, punctuation, or other errors	64%	
• I recopied my paper just the way it was without making any changes	4%	
How much do you usually like to write?		
• Very much	20%	20%
• Somewhat	50%	49%
• Not much	22%	23%
• Not at all	8%	8%
How much did you like writing on this topic?		
• Very much	19%	19%
• Somewhat	48%	47%
• Not much	22%	23%
• Not at all	11%	12%

	1996	1997
In which of the following modes of writing have you written this year?		
• Expository - Yes	54%	56%
No	12%	12%
Not sure	34%	32%
• Imaginative - Yes	75%	75%
No	15%	15%
Not sure	10%	10%
• Narrative - Yes	70%	70%
No	14%	14%
Not sure	16%	16%
• Persuasive - Yes	60%	63%
No	23%	21%
Not sure	17%	16%
Do you write papers longer than one page in classes other than English or language arts?		
• Yes	46%	44%
• Occasionally	45%	47%
• No	9%	9%
In your English or language arts class, how often are your papers assessed or graded using the analytic traits (ideas and content, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions)?		
• Most of the time	51%	54%
• Sometimes	33%	34%
• Never	4%	4%
• I do not understand what you mean by analytic traits.	11%	9%
About how much time did you use to write your paper?		
• 60 minutes or less		23%
• 70 to 100 minutes		35%
• 100 to 150 minutes		32%
• 160 minutes or more		10%
The amount of time allowed for the writing test was		
More than I needed		30%
About right		59%
Not enough		11%

Chapter 3
The Classroom Connection

The Value of the Scoring Guide in the Classroom

Many teachers throughout Oregon have realized since the early 1980's that the analytic approach to writing assessment has value for them and their students in both assessment and instruction. The scoring guide has been revised and refined as it has been applied to hundreds of thousands of student papers over the past fifteen years. It has proven to be an effective instructional tool because it provides

- common, specific understandings about the elements of good writing;
- the same vocabulary as students and teachers discuss writing across grade levels, classrooms, schools, and districts (eventually, as more teachers and students use the guide, the common approach and vocabulary should provide continuity for the approximately one-third of Oregon's student population that is highly mobile);
- a vehicle for meaningful self-evaluation and self-reflection;
- a focus for meaningful peer feedback among students;
- specific feedback to students about their relative strengths and weaknesses;
- true integration of assessment and instruction, since the same method is used for both;
- a vehicle for communicating with parents, administrators, and the public at large about specific goals and standards for student writing.

Using the Scoring Guide as an Instructional Tool

As teachers have incorporated the scoring guide into their instruction and assessment, they have developed materials and methods to help students apply and eventually internalize the guide. Some suggested practices:

- Either obtain copies of the scoring guides in student language at the appropriate grade level from the Oregon Department of Education, or have students themselves "translate" the scoring guide into student-friendly language.

- After students have worked with the complete guide, have them use condensed versions of the scoring guides, perhaps using only the full descriptions of score point numbers 3, 4, and 5 in order to make the document more manageable on a day-to-day basis.

- Copy condensed versions of the guide to fit on both sides of one page; use brightly colored paper, laminate, three-hole punch, and distribute to students to keep in their notebooks throughout the year. Number them and collect them at the end of the year to re-use the following year.

- Create colorful classroom posters for each trait with a few key words, phrases, and pictures or graphics.

- Obtain samples of actual student writing to share with students. Collect your own, or use samples in collections such as those in this booklet or in others published by the

Oregon Department of Education. Teach students to score these samples of writing using the scoring guide. Begin with group scores and discussion, perhaps with read-alouds of sample writing, or with overhead transparencies. Contrast strong and weak examples as you introduce each trait, discussing differences. Make sure students tie their scores and comments directly to the descriptors in the scoring guide itself. Create an atmosphere that establishes the value of accurate, honest feedback if students are to become stronger writers.

- After scoring samples of student writing in order to learn how to interpret and apply the scoring guide, have students apply the scoring guide in peer review situations involving their own original writing. Scoring slips with room for comments can be provided, along with five to ten minutes of discussion time. Accountability can be built in if students sign their slips and comments, attach them to the draft, and get a few points of credit. Again, emphasize the importance of basing the scores and comments directly on language from the guide. Peer review seems most useful at some point in the writing process when students still have an opportunity for revision.

- Some teachers, especially at the elementary level, will score only one or two traits on a given assignment so that students will focus more attentively on that particular trait. For example, if a teacher has just presented a series of mini-lessons on Conventions, then perhaps just that trait will be scored on the next major writing assignment.

- Feel free to adapt the scoring guide to fit specific requirements for certain assignments. If, for example, students have been asked to provide graphics for a certain assignment, add that to the list of traits to be scored. Be sure to inform students of specific scoring criteria before they begin the assignment.

- Over time, it is likely that patterns of student performance in the traits will emerge in a given class. You may notice that the class as a whole tends to have problems with Organization, or perhaps just with writing inviting introductions and developed conclusions. (Students can be asked to keep a form in their portfolios that tracks their individual scores on a series of papers over time so that they–and you–can perceive patterns of scores. Such individual papers could be analyzed for whole-class patterns as well.) Once the weaknesses have been identified, mini-lessons can be designed to address them.

- Notice that the latest revision of the scoring guide (Appendix A) includes a guide for Citing Sources on the final page. (It is required as part of the Collection of Work Samples that students in grades 8 and 10 include a paper in which they have utilized outside resources and cited them appropriately.) This guide for Citing Sources should help assess those critical skills.

- Of course, not all student work needs to be scored using the scoring guide. Most teachers who use it do so only for significant, lengthier pieces on which students will spend some time; they are pieces that students will take through most stages of a writing process. Short writing assignments, journal entries, reader responses to literature, etc., are not usually scored using the scoring guide.

- Since our education system has traditionally used a grading system of letter grades, individual classroom teachers who use the scoring guide to assess student writing need to decide how to mesh the two. There are basically two approaches:

- The first approach is to find a mathematical correlation between the scoring guide and a letter grade that satisfies your concept of a fit. Some teachers have utilized the following method: add the six scores assigned for a given paper and average them to obtain a single score. Then, a 6 would earn an A+ because it is exemplary, exceptional work (even though it may not be perfect); a 5 would earn an A or a B because it exceeds the standard (an A paper would contain some insight and would score high in the four most critical traits); a 4 would earn a low B or high C because it meets the standard as a solid paper (again, the solidity of the four critical traits might be the deciding factor); a 3 would earn a D because it falls short of the standard; and 1's and 2's would earn an F. Averages with a decimal (which would include most papers) would fall somewhere in between. Adapting scores to the grading system with a direct mathematical correlation is difficult, and teachers are still experimenting to find a system that meets everyone's needs and expectations.

- The second approach is to score papers for all six traits and assign a holistic letter grade that takes all six traits into consideration; explain to students that this is different from a holistic letter grade of several decades ago because all six scoring criteria form the basis for the holistic score, rather than an overall impression about the effectiveness of the piece (usually based primarily upon conventions). Clearly, papers with mostly 5's and 6's will earn an A, 4's and 5's a B, and so forth. Teachers who have used this approach have been satisfied with it and have been able to gain the confidence of students and parents, but some still search for a more straightforward mathematical correlation.

Writing Process Encouraged in Assessment, Still Part of Common Curriculum Goals / Content Standards

As teachers across the state reviewed drafts of **Performance Standards** for the CIM and CAM system, many voiced their deeply felt concern that the writing process did not appear in the standards, since most contemporary teachers of writing understand from experience the value of process. Process has not disappeared from the state curriculum; it appears as part of the **Common Curriculum Goals**. (Performance Standards differ from Content Standards in that they specify what students **must demonstrate in order to earn a Certificate of Initial and Advanced Mastery**.) If a student has produced a collection of writing samples that meets the standards in every way, yet has not clearly demonstrated the process used, should he or she be denied a certificate? At that level, it is the products of the process being offered as evidence of achievement.

Nevertheless, the state curriculum continues to recognize the value of instructing students in a variety of approaches and strategies related to process. Writing instructors should teach process, facilitate it by providing time for it, give feedback to students about their processes, and perhaps award points toward a grade for using process.

The Statewide Writing Assessment itself encourages process by its very structure; directions for students include suggestions and time allotments for a pre-write, a first draft, a Student Guide to Revision at each grade level (see Appendix D), and a final draft. Survey questions at the end of the assessment ask students to identify what they did during various stages of the writing process as they participated in the assessment. (The surveys in recent years indicate that most Oregon students do, in fact, utilize a writing process, and that they are familiar with terminology related to process. Perhaps most rewarding to teachers are the revision strategies practiced by students during the assessment; see Chapter 2 for detailed results of the Student Survey.)

Classroom teachers who facilitate process have sometimes questioned the lack of opportunity during the writing assessment for feedback from others. Under normal circumstances in the everyday world, there is opportunity for feedback from people such as colleagues, supervisors, and family members. However, in the working world and in everyday personal business matters, such opportunities do not always exist, and students need to learn how to be self-sufficient writers who can write effectively "on-demand." Their Collections of Work Samples provide ample opportunity for peer, teacher, and parental response; the writing assessment is the one on-demand task to demonstrate independence as a writer.

The scoring guide itself can be used with a writing process at several stages. Following is a sample scenario from a classroom that utilizes both process and the scoring guide:

- Brainstorming of topic: whole-class discussion, small-group discussions, and/or one-on one conversations as students choose and narrow topics–perhaps everyone is to write a persuasive piece, for example, after a few mini-lessons on effective persuasion which include models by both professionals and students
- Individual pre-writing activities: word clustering, mapping, webbing, formal or informal outlining (Perhaps 5 or 10 points possible)
- First draft: purpose is to get thoughts to flow; although conventions are eventually of critical importance, revising, editing, and proofreading come later in the process–most writers find it disruptive to their thought process to check accuracy of conventions at this point (Perhaps 25 points possible)
- Peer response: using the scoring guide, students give each other specific feedback on each of the six traits. They might actually assign scores to papers, based on the descriptors in the scoring guide; score sheets might be signed. One-on-one conversations might follow to provide explanatory verbal feedback about the paper. (Perhaps 10 points possible for the person providing the response) This helps make peer response more meaningful, rather than a generic, "I liked your paper..."
- Second draft: using feedback from peers and possibly a teacher as well (who might be circulating around the room skimming papers and giving verbal feedback during the peer response time allotment), students now revise the first draft, paying close attention to each trait, including careful and thoughtful use of conventions. When they hand this draft in, they are saying, "Given everything I know about writing, and given some feedback from peers, this is the very best I can do." (75 or 100 points possible) Notice that the points are loaded into this stage of the process in many classrooms. If students are highly motivated, it makes sense to load points into the final revision, but many students, unfortunately, will wait until they get specific feedback from teachers, including notation of conventional errors, before they get serious about revision. Making this stage worth the most points helps develop independence and self-sufficiency.
- Teacher scores second draft using scoring guide; written comments are included that point out specific characteristics of the paper (e.g., "Conclusion could be more developed.")
- Revision: using feedback from the teacher, students revise their second drafts, paying close attention to each trait and all written comments. Students are expected to correct all errors in conventions pointed out, and to incorporate other suggestions (e.g., "Conclusion could be more developed"). In order to earn a significant proportion of points possible, students need to not only correct conventions errors, but also to engage in deep revision. This is not a proofreading exercise, and the scoring guide can help with specific suggestions for true revision. (30 to 40 points possible–

not as many as the previous draft in order to foster independent best efforts, but definitely worth doing.)

- Note: It is helpful for students, teachers, and portfolio reviewers if students keep all drafts of papers. (Most find it helpful to go from the bottom up, with the most recent draft always stapled to the top of previous drafts and pre-writes.) This helps evaluators see "raw" student work, input from peers and teachers, and an overview of the student's process.

Integrating the Statewide Writing Assessment into the Classroom (with Tips for Helping Students Do Their Best)

As Oregon schools phase in the Education Act for the 21st Century, a student's performance on the Statewide Writing Assessment becomes a critical part of his or her qualification for a Certificate of Initial Mastery. Regardless of the legislation, however, many teachers have for years valued the feedback their students receive from an "outside" evaluation of their writing, and some have devised ways in which to incorporate the assessment into their instruction in a meaningful way. It is also important to prepare students for the assessment and to create an environment in which they will be able to do good work. Following are some suggestions for classroom teachers:

- Inform students early in the year that they will participate in the assessment in the spring. Emphasize that you value the assessment, and that it can give everyone (students, teachers, parents, administrators) some good information about their progress as writers. Assure them that if they will give you their attention throughout the year and try their best to improve as writers, they will perform in a satisfactory manner on the assessment. Let them know that you're in this together, with you as their coach.

- Refer to the assessment on a regular basis throughout the year, not to raise the anxiety level, but to prepare students for what is to come. No one likes surprises.

- Frame the assessment as part of their total collection of work samples and accomplishments as writers. Their portfolios will contain several samples of their writing; this assessment represents how they responded to a particular prompt on a particular day under some degree of time constraint and no access to outside resources other than a dictionary, electronic spell check, and thesaurus.

- Talk to your administrators and ask that the assessment be administered during a time that will make most sense for students. Usually, teachers feel students do their best during the middle of the week, and during the middle of the morning. Ask that a teacher administer the assessment who will communicate a sense of valuing the assessment and who will establish an atmosphere that is orderly, quiet, and conducive to good writing. (Many classroom teachers like to administer the assessment to their own students during the time at which they usually have English class.) Be sure the administrator of the assessment understands that resources such as dictionaries, electronic spell-checkers, and thesauruses may be available for student use, and that arrangements can be made for students to finish the assessment who have not completed it within the suggested time frame.

- A week or so before the assessment, remind students that it is approaching. Remind them, as when preparing to do well on any test, to get a good night's sleep and to eat a good breakfast. (If your school provides snacks for students on occasion, see if you can get some for your students to eat as they listen to directions.)

- At some point before the assessment, discuss some issues with students that will help them make good choices of prompts. Many students, particularly younger ones, will automatically choose the prompt that interests them most, and that's probably the most important criterion. However, students should also consider the mode the prompt is intended to elicit and think about whether or not that particular mode is a strength of theirs. For example, if a student is attracted to a prompt designed to elicit the persuasive mode, and the student knows from experience that he or she often has trouble with that mode, perhaps, on this occasion, it would be wiser to examine other prompts with that in mind.

- After your students have finished the assessment, make copies of their writing before sending them off to your designated Scoring Site. Then, during the next class period, return the students' essays to them; have them self-score, using the scoring guide, just as they have done with other writing throughout the year. Some teachers whose students feel very comfortable with peer scoring also have a peer score each essay. Finally, the teacher scores each essay. The writing is then filed until the essays get returned to the school, almost always before the school year ends. At that time, compare self-scores, peer scores, teacher scores, and those assigned by the two trained professional readers at the official Scoring Site. Take a poll to see how the scores compare, and discuss. Offer to let students read their writing aloud, as hopefully they have become accustomed to do. Some classes have small celebrations when teachers have felt their students, for the most part, tried hard.

- Some teachers assign a grade in the grade book for students' writing generated during the assessment. They reason that if they're taking the equivalent of three class periods for the assessment, it is entirely justified to assess and grade the writing; this is especially appropriate if, on occasion, students have had a writing assignment similar to the assessment itself in that they respond to a limited choice of prompts and do not have access to outside sources of information.

- When the assessment results are returned to students in late spring, many teachers organize lessons so that they may have a private mini-conference with each student to go over scores, help interpret them, and help put them into a more complete perspective of the student's overall strengths and weaknesses as perceived throughout the year.

- During parent-teacher conferences, either in the spring or in the following fall, use the essays written for the assessment (and included in the student's portfolio) as a vehicle for communicating with the parent about the student's progress. Try student-led conferences, in which students take their parents on a tour of their portfolios, including a look at the piece written for the Statewide Assessment and the scores it received.

Chapter 4
Statewide Results and Sample Student Papers

The sample student work that follows was written in the context of either the Writing Assessment itself or in pilots conducted each fall to help refine the prompts before the actual assessments. It is published here to help clarify the Scoring Guide and its application. All the pieces are anonymous, and the names of all characters, schools, and towns have been changed, along with other minor details that might lead to the identification of a particular writer.

For each trait, a total of at least six papers will usually appear: two that exceed the standard at the 5 or 6 score point level; two at the 4 point level (which in fifth grade would meet the standard and in third grade would exceed the standard); two at the 3 point level (which in fifth grade would fall short of the standard but in third grade would meet the standard); and one at the 1 or 2 point level (which would fall short of the standard at both grade levels). There will occasionally be an additional paper at some of the score points, although in Voice and Word Choice, we could not find one to meet the lowest score point levels in third grade. The hope is that students and teachers will more clearly understand the Scoring Guide and the standards as they see examples of papers that have scored at particular points on the scale. (See Chapter 2 for ideas about how to use these papers as part of instruction in the language arts classroom.)

Each paper has been selected because it has earned a particular score for the particular trait being addressed; this does not mean it has earned this score for other traits, of course. Student writing is often a mix of strengths and weaknesses, so while a paper might have been chosen to illustrate a low score point in a particular trait, it may well have strengths in other traits, and vice-versa. It is important to keep each trait separate in one's mind during the scoring process, even though, realistically, all traits work together to create a whole piece. Each piece has been reprinted here exactly as it was written, complete with minor and major errors. A brief commentary precedes each piece, and all quotes in the commentaries are either directly from the Scoring Guide or from the student paper that follows the commentary.

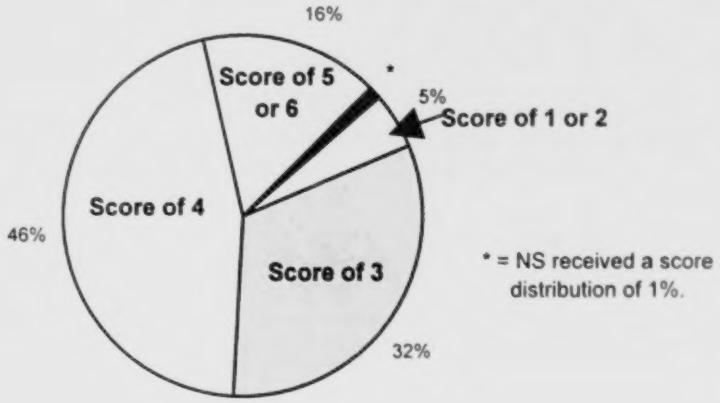
Sample papers written by fifth graders will appear first (for all traits), followed by those written by third graders.

Grade 5

Ideas and Content

In 1997, the average score for fifth graders on the trait of Ideas and Content was 3.7. Overall, 62% of the scores received met the standard (a 4 or above) with 16% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 9. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 66-67.

Score Distribution at Grade 5: Ideas and Content, 1997



Sample Papers

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 5 or 6): *This first paper is a true gem, exceeding the 6 score point descriptors in all six traits and in the imaginative mode. In terms of Ideas and Content, the writing is "exceptionally clear, focused, and interesting. It holds the reader's attention throughout." The main ideas emerge clearly, and are supported by rich details. This writer is a storyteller. (Notice the especially strong organizational structure also, with a developed beginning and ending that echo each other thematically and tie the whole piece together, as well as the effective transitional devices throughout the piece.)*

Sometimes we wonder why the things in nature are the way they are. Today, I would like to tell you the story of why the llama spits.

Many, many years ago, in the hills of South America, there lived a large family of llamas. There was Abuelito (grandfather in Spanish), Abuelita (grandmother in Spanish), Papa, Mama, Pepito, Monita, and Chiquita (small in Spanish).

Chiquita was very small. She was the smallest llama in the family. The only llama she could really talk to was Abuelita, her grandmother.

One day, Chiquita was walking through the hills with her older sister, Monita. All of a sudden, Pepito, their older brother, jumped out from behind a bush and yelled, "Tag! You're it!" Monita chased him around to the other side of the hill. Chiquita hurried to join the fun, but she tripped over a rock and tumbled down the hill, faster and faster, until she bumped into a tree.

She stood up and checked herself for bruises. There was not sign of Pepito and Monita. "Oh, no!" exclaimed Chiquita. "How will I ever get home?"

Chiquita walked farther and farther down the large hill. Suddenly, out of no where, she heard a howl. A wolf's howl. She turned around. A wolf was right behind her! "Hello, little llama," he growled. "Are you lost?" The wolf was an evil, nasty creature, full of mean tricks. His hobby was playing tricks on animals and making them suffer. In his paws, he held a green persimmon. "If you eat this green fruit," he said, "you will be able to find your way home." The wolf knew that un-ripe persimmons were dry and tart. He wanted to trick Chiquita into eating one. He wanted to see her mouth turn inside-out!

Unfortunately, Chiquita didn't know that. She agreed to eat the green fruit. She took a bite. It was very crunchy. Suddenly, her mouth became as dry as cotton. She tasted the sour tartness of the green persimmon. Chiquita knew at once that the wolf had tricked her.

She ran like she never ran before, ducking under low branches and jumping over fallen ones. She ran to the nearest creek and filled her mouth with water. She swished the water around in her mouth, and spit it out. She kept doing this over and over again, but it was no use. She knew that the taste would be in her mouth forever.

Chiquita began to notice that whenever she was upset or annoyed, she spit because the taste in her mouth got worse. To this day, all llamas spit to try to rid their mouth from the taste of the green persimmon.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The next paper also exceeds the standard for Ideas and Content. Although it has some problems in Conventions, it is a very focused, clear, and interesting story about how the sun and moon were placed in the sky. All details are relevant to the development of the storyline (and the humor contributes to a strong score in Voice as well).

Once uponatime in a faraway land lived a pair of twins Sun and Moon. Sun was a boy moon was a girl Now when they were old enough to fight whith each other that was all they did, and they only faut about one thing, a stupid thing, who would go first. When they were 10 they would fight about who woud go to bed first, who would take the first bight, no mater how disgusting it was, they wanted to go first. Then one day when their teacher was passing out a math test when she herd Sun and moon fighting about who would write the first answer down. Finely she screamed "Thats enough go to the principals office." So with tears in their eyes they walked to the office. Then when the principal said "One at a time." They got snears on their faces and started to fight about who would go in first. Then the principal screamed, "For goodness sakes both of you get in hear." So they stoped–no one had ever solved one of their fights befor. When they went into the principals office he declared they talk to the Lord of decision–he would know what to do. So they did and he declared, "You two shall go to a place where no one has to listen to your ubserd fights. You are banished to the sky. Sun, you are master of the day. Moon, you are master of the night." So they were banished to the sky where to this day they still fight.

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Meets the Standard (Score of 4): *The next paper illustrates the benefits of the analytic trait approach to assessment. Although it clearly does not meet the standard for Conventions, it clearly does meet the standard for Ideas and Content with a high 4. The main ideas here are easy to understand, and they are developed by relevant, interesting supporting detail. "The writing is clear and focused," with an "easily identifiable purpose," which is to recount an exciting experience duck hunting.*

It was a cold December day. Woke up to my dads filmier voice saying get up and get ready. Instantly I remember that we had mad plans to take my Uncle and cousin to our duck blind for a little bit of hunting. I awoke and got drested. My Dad and I mad hot chocolate to take along.

My cousin and uncle were up at my Grandmothers house getting ready. We drove up there quickly the ran out and jumped in the truck. We turned on the heat and all at once we all started about how cold it was. Befor we knew it we were there.

We got out our guns and trudged through the mushy mucky mud feald to the blind. My Dad and Uncle Mark got the decoies and went into the pond to break the Ice and set up the decoies in the correct formation for the day. My cousin Matt and I got the heater started. After the heater was going and the decoies set up we sat down and loaded our guns for the hunt.

Wish a flock of malards flew over us. We all heald uor breath in amazement as their beating wings blew icy cold air on us. It was like a vent blowing ice cold air on us on a hot summer day. They came around again, now they were sailing over and over again. Fianly a peace of the flock broak of and whent down to land. My uncle yeled "Take em". All four of us jumped up and shot. I puld up and shot a drake. Splash it dropted in the water. "I got him." I bleartcd out.

After it was all over it turned out that my dad droped one two. We were all to excited to hunt eny more so we packed up and whint home. To a nice warm fire place.

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The next paper is another personal narrative, this time based on an experience raising a pig for 4-H. It is clear and focused, with relevant supporting details that develop the main ideas; for these reasons, it meets the standard.

I am in the swine club of 4-H. I enjoy it but I always get very attached to my pig before fair time. Then it is difficult to give my pig up for the sale.

When I first became involved in 4-H I had no idea the amount of time and work that I would need to do.

First, I go with my mom to find just the right pig. It can not come home with me until it is eight weeks old. I look for a pig that is not bony, but nice, plump and round.

After the pig comes home with me I must clean the pin daily and give him fresh water.

The pig will be home for four months before the fair. The pigs weight has to be between two hundred and thirty and two hundred and fifty pounds.

In grooming you bathe and scrub their ears to look its best for the judge which is called showmanship. You also condition the hair and skin so that the skin stays soft and also hair to not be rough. You need to brush the hair in one direction.

To exercise and train your pig you need to use a cane upsidedown and tap the neck or close to the face. Never tap the ribs, legs, or rump it shows bad showmanship. That's how you take care of a 4-H pig.

If you do these steps correctly, you will win in the fair, like I did.

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Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 3): *The following papers earned a score of 3 for Ideas and Content and therefore do not meet the standard. The reader can understand the main idea in the first paper (a memorable time smashing grapes to make juice), but the developmental details are "limited in scope" and many are off-topic; the writer spends as much time digressing about the soapy water as he does about the main topic, so focus is lacking.*

When I was in Kindergarden we had a time we did a whole bunch of games and different stuff.

One of the things I went to was called the Grape Smasher. There was a big bucket of grapes.

First you had to take of you shoes and socks and wash your feet in soapy water. I wouldnt call it soapy water because it didnt look like soapy water it was the same soap we have in the bathroom.

So if you went to this school and used the soap that we do you could think how much the water stunck it smelled like rotten fish. The soap was like poder.

The water was so cold when touched it turned into ice. Well, anyway after you wash you feet you get into the bucket of grapes and start jumping on them to make grape juice some people drank it but I didnt. That was a time I will never forget.

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The following paper scored a high 3: it's definitely on its way to a developed idea, but doesn't quite make it. The supporting detail is limited. The reader can definitely understand the main ideas here, but they're somewhat "overly broad and simplistic."

The thing that I would like to keep forever is my diary. My diary has The Little Mermaid on it and her ocean surroundings. I loved the ocean background so much that I chose it to become my diary. I won't be scared if my brothers try to read it because I have a little golden lock that holds it tightly together. I put the old-fashioned key in a secret place so nobody would find it but me. My diary has my childhood memories and dreams that I will treasure forever. When I am grown I can unlock the magic of my life and read it all over again.

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Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 1 or 2): *The following paper scored a 2 in Ideas because "development is attempted but minimal." There are "insufficient details" to develop the topic of learning to skateboard.*

I was with my friends and Joe came over and said jeck me out and he was riding a skateboard. I told my mom and we went go get 35 dollar and we got one so. I tried and tried and then I got hit but after a few more days. I got on it and know. I know how to ride a skateboard.

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The next paper scored a 1 in Ideas and Content because, even though the central purpose is clear (to describe pizza), "attempts at development are minimal; the paper is too short to demonstrate the development of an idea."

Pizza has sauce and cheese and pepperoni. It has sausage and it's good. It has crust. I like crust that's thin.

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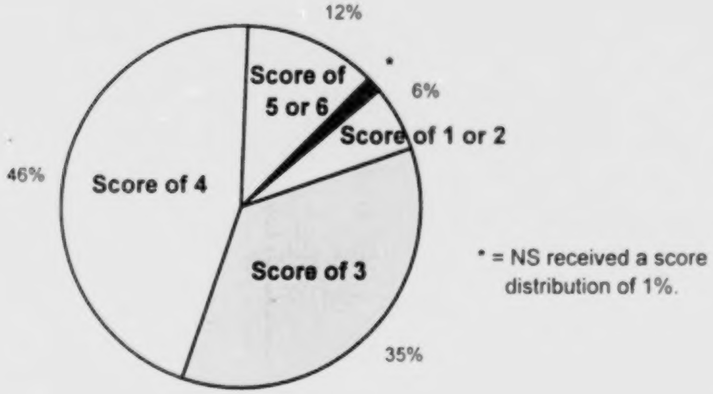
Organization

In 1997, the average score for fifth graders in the area of Organization was 3.6. Overall, 58% of the scores received met the standard (a 4 or above) with 12% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 9. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 66-67.

Score Distribution at Grade 5: Organization, 1997



Sample Papers

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 5 or 6): *The following papers both received high scores in Organization. The first piece is a fantasy about slam-dunking a basketball, and in spite of some problems with Conventions, the organizational structure "enhances the central idea and its development." Sequencing is effective, with transitions that move the reader easily from one part of the story to the next. The beginning and ending are developed, and details fit where placed. (The ending that involves waking up from a dream is a stock kind of ending, but this one is a little different.)*

On a dark blue peacefull day, I went out to shoot some hoops, whith my friends. Me and my friends were having a contest. The contest was to see who could touch the basketball net. The net was seven and a half feet high. It was my best friends turn, Jake. Jake mist it by a centimeter. That scent a chill up my hairless spine. The pressure was on me now. I was the last person. If I touched the net I would win, because no one has touched it yet. When I was about to jump I saw the most cutest girl in our school. Her name was Molly Blascomb. Now the pressure was really on Molly was waiting for me to jump. I looked down to make sure I had my new shoes on, there called the Wind Walkers, I had them on. When I jumped I made sure I would touch the net. The net wasn't the only thing I touched. I touched the 10 ft. rim! Molly fainted, and my friends jaws fell to the ground. Not mentioning Jake's hair went flying up like a rocket. I was stunned myself. I ran into my garage to get a basketball. I was going to see if I could dunk it. When I jumped it felt like I was jumping on a 20 foot trampoline.

After I dunked it a few times I went inside to show my family that I could slam it! When my parents knew that I could slam it, they called The Guiness Book of World Records to see if they could get me in there book.

When the book photographers got to my house, they asked if they could see me dunk it. I told them I'd do my best dunk ever. I did a 720 in air, double back flip, spinaround, while eating a Big Mac (from Mcdonalds), triple axle dunk!

That second I felt a shake on my left arm. It was my mom. She was waking me up for school. Darn! I really thought the dunk was true. Maybe it is I whispered to myself. I went to check our Guinness Book of World Records to see if it was true. I looked under best dunks. There it was on the third to last page. That was my best moment ever!

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Strong in all traits, this descriptive paper exceeds the standard for Organization with a score of 5. The beginning and ending are particularly strong and well-developed for a fifth grader (most writers at this age are satisfied with one-sentence beginnings and endings that are overly obvious). This piece is also characterized by effective sequencing and details that fit where placed.

As I layed down my book and bent over to turn the light off I stared at her. She was sitting backwards, with her face smashed in the side of my stuffed pig. Her ears were bent and twisted. I picked her up and shook her. I smoothed out her dress and untwisted her long ears.

Who? My stuffed, handmade bunny named Rosy. I got her when I was about five or six, for Easter. My older cousin got one also, but it didn't have much personality.

The way Rosy got her name is because her dress has little rosebuds on it. The rest of her dress is pink. Her body is made of unbleached cotton. Her apron is white and ties in back, although it is always untying. She has a pink nose and the insides of her ears are pink. Her black bead eyes stare at everything, looking at everything.

She has been fixed alot. Once, her eyes came off and my grandma had to sew them back on. Her chin has no stuffing in it and never has. That makes her chin all wrinkly. She also has arms and legs that look like link sausage because they are tied at the elbows and knees. On her legs are a pair of bloomers that always fall off because there's not much elastic in the waist.

I suddenly realize that I have not turned off the light yet. I laughed. I set down Rosie and turned off the light. I snuggled down in the soft, down covers and slowly drifted to sleep.

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Meets the Standard (Score of 4): *In the following two papers, the "organization is clear and coherent." In the first piece, there is clear sequencing and the reader can easily follow the incident related by the writer. The beginning and ending are recognizable, although they might be more developed. (Notice the engaging voice throughout the piece.)*

One sunny day in kindergarten my friend asked me if I wanted to go hitch hiking. I said yes, even though I didn't know what hitch hiking was.

I followed him out of the playground, threw the soccer field, and around the fence. I knew I wasn't suppose to be there, but I went ther anyways. He told me to stick my thumb up and wave my hand up and down. No one noicted us up as we sat on the hot sidewalk hitch hiking.

Then the aid must have seen us because she took us to the principal's office. I walked into the principal's office nevosly as the aid opened the door. It smelled like leather.

When he saw us he rose from his seat. It didn't end up as badly as I thought it would. All he did was give us a long talk about how we shouldn't hitch hike, and then he called our moms.

When I got home that evening my mom gave me another talk about hitch hiking. It sounded just like the principal's long speach.

I got grounded from T.V., but I didn't watch much anyways.
After that I never went hitch hiking again. At least now I know what hitch hiking is.

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The next piece also scored a 4 in Organization, although it has slightly different qualities from the last piece. In this case, the organizational structure is "formulaic" and "predictable": the writer tells the reader in the first paragraph that his favorite dinner was comprised of chicken, cantaloupe, bread, broccoli, and milk; each subsequent paragraph of the piece deals with each of those foods in that order (except the broccoli, for some reason). No reader would have trouble following such a clear structure, but it seems a little stilted; we hope our students will eventually learn to organize their writing in ways that are more subtle and graceful.

My most favorite dinner was some chicken, with a Cantaloupe, some bread, some broccoli, and a glass of milk. Let me tell you about it.

The chicken was very tasty. The chicken was spicy, and hot, so I had to wait for the chicken to cool off. I think the chicken had good wings and legs but I liked the breast the best.

The cantaloupe was small so I almost ate the whole thing. There was a little pitch black pepper on it but it did not bother me. It was very juicy.

The bread was very good. It was homemade and hot because it just got out of the oven baking. After a while I put it in the toaster, and put butter on it. We made two loafs, one of the loafs was cinnamon bread, and the other was just plain. The cinnamon bread was gone because everybody in my family liked it.

The milk was very good. The milk was 2% milk, my favorite and is due 2-27-94 and the milk was served to me in a blue glass.

This dinner was the best dinner because I like all of these thing very well.

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Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 3): *The following two papers received scores of 3 for Organization, which falls short of the standard. In the first paper, the beginning and ending are present but undeveloped, and, in the opening paragraph, "the order or relationship among ideas is unclear." Placement of details is not always effective.*

I think "Shiloh" would be most appropriate for the Young Reader's Choice book award. If you think about it, you would probably do that for a dog. It is a real situation. A dog makes your life more fulfilling and enjoyable. Ever since I got a dog, my life, to me has been more enjoyable.

When the boy goes out of his way to help Shiloh and acts like a slave to Shilo's real owner, that is a true act of kindness. I also especially like the part when the two, (the boy and Shiloh), go running out in the field together, playing and laughing about. The book was sad and funny, all at one time. It was sad when Shiloh almost got killed by their neighbor's dobermen and also when the boy's mother came into the forest and the boy was all s-st-stammering to give her an explanation without actually telling her the truth.

Like I said, I really like this story. I was just reading "The Apple Dumpling Gang" and I like this story alot better. That is why I am asking you to give this book the award. Please!

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In the second paper, which also scored a 3, "an attempt has been made to organize the writing," but placement of details is not effective. A beginning and ending are present but undeveloped, and transitions need to be used more effectively.

I have a quilt, made by my Grandma. It's so pretty. It's made with pink fabric on one side with white hearts and on the other side it has scraps of beautiful clothing cut out of square shapes & the square shapes are in a diamond sortof shape. It's great.

It keeps me worm at night when it's really cold outside. It is so big that some times it falls off my bed. When I grow up, I want to save the quilt for my frist girl so it will be past down to her first girl.

If I where in a fire I would probably grab my quilt my brother, my sister and then my money. I would grab my quilt because it would keep me worm. It's so soft and smooth. My Grandma gave it to me for my Christmas. My Grandma makes all different kinds of things like, Barbidolls clothes, pillows, quilts, and other neat things. I love that quilt. I will treasure that quilt for the rest of my life.

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Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 2): *The following piece has a beginning and some sense of organization in the form of a list, but no ending. However, "the piece is simply too short to demonstrate organizational skills."*

You should let the dog sleep in the house. I will train him, and I will leave him water, and food ever day. When he needs to go to the bathroom I will but him out side ever day. I will clean him, and comb him ever tow weeks.

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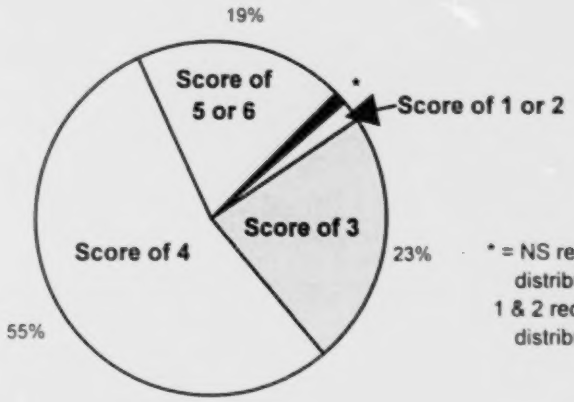
Voice

In 1997, the average score for fifth graders on the trait of Voice was 3.9. Although students are not required to receive a minimum score to meet a standard in the area of Voice, this trait is scored to provide additional information on students' writing. Overall, 74% of the scores received were a 4 or above with 19% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 9. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 66-67.

Score Distribution at Grade 5: Voice, 1997



* = NS received a score distribution of 1%; 1 & 2 received a score distribution of 2%.

Sample Papers

High (Score of 5 or 6): *The following imaginative piece scored a 6 in Voice because the writer "seems deeply committed to the topic, and there is an exceptional sense of 'writing to be read.'" This topic "has come to life," and the writing shows exceptional originality and humor. It's a creation story, and the notion of a pesky owl bugging a creator who finally becomes impatient and gives the owl its just desserts is quite engaging and unusual.*

Once, a long time ago there was nothing living on the earth. It was a bare place in the middle of nowhere. No animals, no lakes, no oceans, not even one little ant lived there! The creator of the world asked himself, "What is a planet without any living things?" He decided he would give the earth some "green living life" he called it.

He began to form trees and bushes out of clay. Slowly rocks, mountains, grass, lakes, and flowers formed. Then he placed them on the earth. Everywhere on the bare planet, now grew beautiful things! But the creator thought, this is not enough, there must be something else.

So the creator began to form animals. The peacock, the giraffe, and elephant were all formed, then they were all set on a big work bench. The lion, tiger, seagull. and deer were next to them.

Finally all the animals were made but owl and kangaroo. When the creator was forming the kangaroo, owl (who was already formed) started pestering the creator. "Can I have some seagull wings" said owl. "Oh please, or mabe... I can have a peacock tail, yeh! You could always add a lion mane to me, but I really want a raccoon mask. I think they are neat!

While the creator was listening to owl, although he did not know he was doing it, he was pulling the kangaroo's legs farther and farther out. In the middle of when owl was saying, "I really need a giraffe neck." The creator yelled," that is anough. I'm through with your babbling talk." Then he looked down at the kangaroo. It's legs were half the length of it's body! "Owl" he cried "I am about to smash you back into clay. Kangaroo was not suppose to have long legs!

You are going to get none of those fancy details I put on the other animals, you are going to get short... gray feathers! You will also, unlike them only be allowed to eat in the night away from the animals." The creator finished the kangaroo and gathered all the different kinds, shapes and colorful animals, including the owl. Then he set them all gently on the earth where they have lived ever since!

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The next paper, one in the persuasive mode, also scored high in Voice. Since the topic was to convince adults to lengthen recess time, it was appropriate to choose a personal voice, and there is definitely a sense of "writing to be read." This writer cared about his topic (enough to do a few mathematical calculations) and the reader "can discern the writer behind the words."

Kids shouldn't only get fifteen minutes of recess. I think they should get at least thirty. Kids do alot of work. We want them to learn but we also want them to think that school is fun. So that all the kids will want to go to school. If you were a kid and you didn't have alot of time to play wouldn't you want to talk with someone? I bet atleast 75% of the kids in the whole world want more playtime on their playground. The teachers would get a brake from teaching and have time to get prepared for when the kids come in. Sometimes because we don't have alot of time to play we have to quit in the middle of a game. If we got thirty minutes we would have enough time to play a game or do something fun. If we took fifteen minutes each day in a year we would only have 5,340 minutes of playtime in a year. If we took thirty minutes into a year it would equal 10, 680 minutes. That's plenty of time to play. So I hope kids will get more playtime. When we get alot of time to play I want to finish the game I started. Put yourself in a kids body and feel how they would feel if they got a little time to play.

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Mid-Range (Score of 4): *This next paper received a score of 4 in Voice. In this case, a voice is definitely present, especially in the first half of the paper, but it is inconsistent; in the second half of the piece, the voice seems to fade away and there is a fairly flat recounting of imaginary events.*

I used to think I was a nobody, very little qualities. Hi, my name is Brent Jannings. I am 11 years old, and I'm the class clown. The funny thing is I'm a smart class clown. My idea of fun is soccer, roller blading, hacky sack, and jumping on my trampoline. Sometimes those can entertain me for a while, but my excitement and enjoyment would have to be snowboarding. That is how my story starts.

On a sunny warm winter day while I was snowboarding at Mt. Hood Meadows, I thought it would be fun to try at a contest. I was looking at the contests listed on the buletin board and saw one for some Juveniles 16 years and under. I asked my mom if I could join. She thought about it and she said yes. So the day of the contest arrived. I was scared. The first challenge was the halfpipe. I started out pretty bad but then something in me kicked in. I went up on the wall and I went soaring into the sky, did a triple flip and landed perfectly. The judjes were stunned.

Then the jump course came up. I was afriad of jumps because I might fall, and lose points, but there was that thing again. When I started I was doing perfect. As before the judjes were stunned. The contest was over and I won.

Then when I thought nothing could be better it did. I as chosen the first kid to be on the american snowboarding team. I went to Norway and I was spectacular. I won and they wanted me to name a race. I named after the Iditarod. So I named it the Severod, and it was from the top of Mt. Everest to the bottom. Though, I never raced I was the president. Until one day.

There was a big jock who wanted to race me on the trail. I started out pretty well and right as I was about to finish when I twisted and broke my leg. Then one of my team mate's came out of the clearing, I had to crawl but I made second place. The lesson I learned is nobody is perfect.

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Although the following paper is rather brief, the writer communicates a sense of commitment to the topic; the writing is both engaging and sincere.

On our farm we store cottonseed which we off-load from train cars into trucks. Cottonseed is the seed in which cotton is grown from. Before they let us store it they take out most of the cotton balls. After farmers buy it they feed it to thier cows.

My brothers and I enjoy making forts in this commodity. I build walls, dig holes, make ramps, steps, benches, thrones, beds, paths and traps. Our forts come in diffrent shapes and sizes.

The fort that we are making now is going to be four feet deep, five feet wide, and seven feel long, with a spy tower in the front.

A cotton seed fort is sort of a way to let my imagination run wild and have fun at the same time.

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Mid-Range (Score of 3): *In the next paper, "the writer's commitment to the topic seems inconsistent...there is an occasional sense of the writer behind the words; however, the voice shifts or disappears a line or two later and the writing becomes somewhat mechanical." The potential is here for an appropriately personal voice, since it is a personal narrative about kicking a winning goal, but the writer doesn't let the reader know much about what he was thinking or feeling.*

One day I was Playing soccer. It was a hot day and very wind. I was Playing on Mark's team my best friend. Tim was Playing on Allen's team. I will never forget it was the day I mad the winning goal.

I was I was in the senter of the field. I was looking around and all of a souden the ball was in my feet.

I tribled the ball the rest of the way up the field. Allen was right behind me. I was 16 feet from the goal. I kicked the ball right When Allen slid taked me.

When We Were in line I relised I mad the winning goal. After that Mark wonts me on his team all the time. Allen was so mad the next day he kicked the ball so hard it broke in to two.

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The next paper has a problem similar to that of the previous paper: the writer is discussing a personal topic (a baby quilt made for her by her grandmother), yet she misses the opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to the topic.

I have a blanket that keeps me warm. Its not that skinny and not that long. The colors on the blanket are light pink, light green, and yellow. Each colored squere is kidy-cornerd from the same colored squere. The blanket is pretty if you really look at it.

My grandma made the blanket for me when I was a baby. It was very big but soft. To make it soft, my grandma put cotten in the middle of the swone together squeres.

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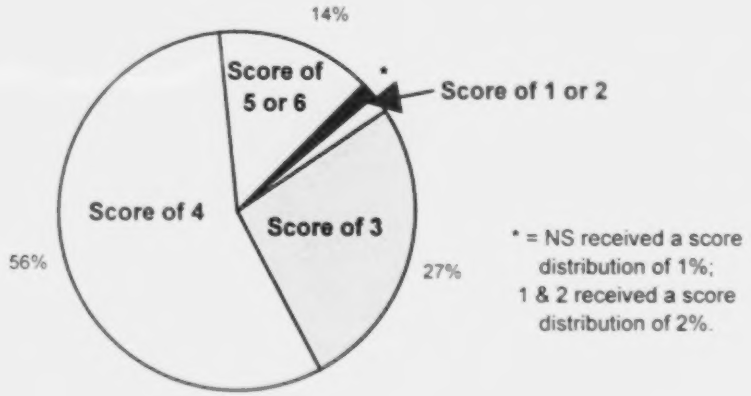
Word Choice

In 1997, the average score for fifth graders on the trait of Word Choice was 3.8. Although students are not required to receive a minimum score to meet a standard in the area of Word Choice, this trait is scored to provide additional information on students' writing. Overall, 70% of the scores received were a 4 or above with 14% of scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 9. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 66-67.

Score Distribution at Grade 5: Word Choice, 1997



Sample Papers

High (Score of 6): *The following paper utilizes a "rich, broad range of words" that are "accurate, specific and strong; powerful words energize the writing." The vocabulary is "striking," yet it sounds natural and is not overdone in this fanciful piece.*

There was a time when the first (and last) dragon hatched, when man took his first step, and the first spider built a home. That last tale is amusing infact I'll tell it to you.

Long ago when the world was young the first spider appeared. Like all who had just come into the light of day in this new world he was a nomad looking for a home. There was a test all creatures must pass, that is this: they had to find shelter or means of protection before nightfall or the creature wouldn't survive.

He set off early and soon came upon an ant hill. A solder ant met him at the base of the hill "Intruder!" he exclaimed. A huge sworm came and carried him inside. He couldn't move for all the ants held him fast. Let's not call him "He" how bought Stanlee. Well anyway Stanlee was led through many dark twisting tunnels. Then Stanlee was dumped in front of an elderly looking ant with a large septer with a giant gleming jewel of purple. His garmet was better than any Stanlee had ever seen, and atop his head was a gold and jewel crown. "I am King Antony the Great," he said. "What business have you, he quickly added. "Please sire might I seek shelter in your fine tunnels." he said softly. "you, an eight-leged creature in my tunnels!" Antony boomed. "Away, now!" "Guards!" Stanlee turned and fled down the tunnels. "Guards!" Antony shrieked. A stout ant hurled himself in front of Stanlee. Stanlee instinctively bit the ant and emerged at the top of the ant hill and ran.

Down-hearted he sat on a black lump on a moss log. The lump squermed under him "Get off you dolt!" it snarled. Stanlee quickly obeyed. The lump rose up and it turned out to be a black beetle. "What do you want," he growled. "N-nothing sir," Stanlee stuttered. " you obviously do if you came here," said the beetle. "Well, might I stay in your beatiful log-sir." "No not an eight-leged lout like you!" "Now skat!" he screamed. Once again Stanlee was turned down.

Around Midday he came to a flower with a drone on it. "Excuse me might I ask a favor of you," Stanlee shouted up. "Make it quick," the drone shouted back. "Might I speak with your queen." "No!" shouted the drone. "How do you know I don't." came a gentle voice. "Queen Beeatrice" exclaimed the drone. "Oh shush you simple drone," said Beeatrice. "Now what's the problem," she demanded. "This wingless male wanted you for some unknown reason." "And what is that," she said landing next to Stanlee. "Well," she snapped. "Can I stay in your hive," he said. "You," she laughed. "You," she repeated, "never," with that she flew away. She lad left a honeycomb. Stanlee ate it and began playing with the wax. He made a nice spiral and decided to keep it.

Stanlee was turned down many times by the cicada, ladybug, catopiller, butterfly and so on. He took out the spiral and began weaving it thiner and longer. The wind caut it and it flew in a tree. He ran to fetch it and found he could walk on it. He lay down for he was sleepy. He decided to sleep there. In the morning he was still alive and there was a bug in his web. He ate it.

Soon after, he stayed in the web and devoured every bug that turned him down for shelter. And thus, the spider came into existance.

* * * * * * * * * * *

High (Score of 5): *In the following paper the writer employs a variety of words that are accurate and specific and that energize the writing. Even though the writer may have gleaned these words from T.V. cartoons, comic books, or other light reading, he has, in fact, incorporated them into his own writing and uses them effectively.*

Twelve o'clock A.M. I stretched and sat up in my bunk. The Sea Angel, a warship, bobbed up and down in the ocean. "All hands on deck!" Captian Lorenza shouted. I dressed as quick as a wink and tore out the door. "Look out, there!!" Bucking Barnack screeched as he bolted past waving his cutlass. I drew my sword and raced to the port side. A ship of pirates sailed up. Kaboom!! A canonball whizzed through the air and struck my cabin. Pirates swung over on long ropes and planks. Out of the corner of my eye I saw a bigger man sneak up behind the captain. Suddenly, I was hurled head long into the ocean. My sword slid on down in front of me. I didn't have much air to start with, but still I gave chase. Barracudas and trout whistled away from me. The sword stuck itself into a lump of coral. I felt a shock on my left leg. Electric eels were all over. I half fainted from lack of air. Turning up, I charged the pack of eels furiously. Many times I got zapped. At last I saw the top. Bursting through the top I realized I had been underwater for a good ten minutes. "Yipee!!" I yelled. I had made it to the Giunness book of WORLD RECORDS.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Mid-Range (Score of 4): *The following paper scored a high 4 for Word Choice. The words "effectively convey the intended message." The writing "has some fine moments and generally avoids clichés."*

One day my family went to a Chineese restorant. I scimmed the menu. I didn't understand a signal word. I did not want to admit this so I asked for the special. When I was served I took a good look at my food. It wasn't to temting. First of all it smelt like my dog's food. I thought I could almost hear my food move. The way it looked is almost undiscribable. On top there was a smooth, pink meat. It looked much like cows tongue. Then there was a sauce. This sauce was almost pure black. It was also thick. Next on my plate there were vegetables. Big vegetables. They were cut in huge pieces. Green, red, yellow they came in all colors.

I just played with my food when I knew I had to try it. I slowly took a bite. It was good! The meat was fresh salmon well done. The sauce was a spicey sauce for the salmon. The vegetables had it's own particular taste. I learned a important lesson. Theres always room for new things.

* * * * * * * * * *

Word choices in the following piece "effectively convey the intended message. The writer employs a variety of words that are functional and appropriate to audience and purpose." As the writer describes a first hike with his father, he uses words that work, which are usually the hallmark of the score point of 4.

The first time I went hiking, I went with my dad. We woke up at five in the morning and ate brekfast. Then we got dressed and packed lunch.

My dad and I louded our gear and lunch in the car, and got in. We where finaly on our way to Mt. Scott. I was real excited...I even think my dad was excited.

My dad was realy astounded that we where the first ones there. We got all our gear out and put it on. If it hadn't been for me saying something, we would've left behind our lunch.

We started up the trail. It wasn't very steep, but it was a challenge. We rested every now and then for about a minute.

My dad told me that there was a look-out at the top of the trail. We took a lot of pictures of Crater Lake from the trail. I saw the look-out from the trail but it was about a mile up the trail.

We finly reached the look-out but it was locked so we coulen't go in, so we ate lunch up there. It was really good. Food always taste good when you worked up a appetite.

We started backdown the trail. On the way we past some other hikers. We got to the car and drove to the visitor's center. We bought some more lunch and souveniers. Then we drove home. That night I had a lot of cramps. Still I was looking forward for another exciting trip.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Mid-Range (Score of 3): *The next paper scored a 3 in Word Choice. (The reader must be careful not to let errors in Conventions influence the score for Word Choice.) The words here are "quite ordinary, lacking interest, precision, and variety." The words "work, but rarely capture the reader's interest." Rather than saying that the writer saw "trees and birds," for example, he could name more specific kinds of trees and birds.*

We started off on the rode to gifford rock. It touck about oen hour. We we got ther the peoplo that wer ther started to tock to us. Then we started to wack up the trel. It was very stepe we so posin oak, rocks, trees, berds, and vow. Wen we got u to the top the gie started to tock and tock. And wen we started to go down it was started every budy started to run down it and fell ito the mud and wos wet.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Low (Score of 2/3): *The following paper borders on a score of 2 and 3, although the 2 descriptor that says "language is monotonous...detracting from the meaning and impact" does describe the paper. There is "monotonous repetition" of words throughout, and those that are used are rather "generic," such as "funny," "sad," "happy," "ugly or neat." The use of the* *word "shagy" to describe the girl's hair is the one strong word choice in the piece; the word "illustration" was part of the writing prompt.*

I read a book "Called the Girl With Green Hair." I liked the pictured because thay where funny. The girl had green hair. Some of the pichers are sad and some are happy. Her hair is rilly shagy. Thay show it in the illustration.

I like the book becuse of the illustration. The book has rilly nice illustrations. I think illustrations make a book. I think illustrations can be ugly or neat.

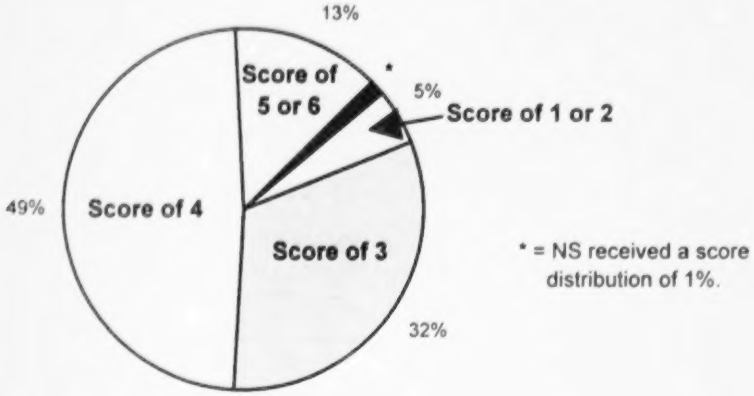
The illustration in this book are rilly funy. My favorte picher is when she has soap suds in her hair. I like this Book.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Sentence Fluency

In 1997, the average score for fifth graders on the trait of Organization was 3.7. Overall, 62% of the scores received met the standard (a 4 or above) with 13% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 9. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 66-67.

Score Distribution at Grade 5: Sentence Fluency, 1997



* = NS received a score distribution of 1%.

Sample Papers

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 5 or 6): *The following two papers scored above the standard in Sentence Fluency. The first is a personal narrative about participating on a swim team one summer. The "writing has an easy flow and rhythm...with strong and varied sentence structures that make expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable." Notice especially the variety of sentence lengths; some are long, complex sentences, while others are short, punchy simple sentences.*

I shouldn't try out, I wouldn't try out. I tried out. That summer was going to be the best summer.

It all started out when swim team had just started a few days before. My mom wanted me to try out. Even though it was to late, she made me.

I was nervouse at first, but after I found out I made the team I was delighted. I smiled with happiness untill I remembered that swim team was for swimming.

"All of the kids will laugh at me," I thought, because I couldn't swim very well.

After a couple of weeks in swim team I got used to holding my breath when I dove in, and jumping off of those big, blue, blocks into the deep chlorine water.

A day later my coach (Nate Matthews) told everyone in swim team that we were going to have a swim meet on Friday. I was so exited I jumped.

We swam hard every day. Even Nate worked hard. Days passed. It was getting closer and closer to the swim meet.

Finally the day arrived. I put my jet black swim suit on and I was ready.

Linda Matthews drove my brother and I to the swim meet. She took us over green hillsides and long, wet, roads, untill we got there.

I played around with my friends untill it was time to jump in the blue water and swim the backstroke across the pool, which seamed like an ocean.

Then I remembered what my mom had told me, "If you work hard and try your best, you will always be a winner." So I hopped into the pool. In two minuts I heard the earsplitting boom. I was off like a flash. I came in second place. I was overjoyed.

After a while we drove slowly home. When I arrived at home, I flopped on the soft bed and fell asleep.

We had many other swim meets, but not as cheerful as this one.

I will always remember because it was the most exellent summer in my life.

* * * * * * * * * * *

This second paper also scored above the standard in Fluency with a 5. Although the first three sentences do not read very smoothly, the piece quickly becomes more fluid. Again, there is variety in sentence structures, lengths, and beginnings, and dialogue sounds natural. Sentence structures actually enhance meaning, which students might be able to see since the subject matter is a martial arts performance.

This story happened to me about a month ago.

See there was a Martal Arts test that day and I was going for my green belt. This is what happened.

"Nathan!" shouted my instructor Ta na Kim.

"Yes, Sir!" I responded as I ran from my place in line. It was my turn to break a board. The kick I was supposed to do was a step sidekick.

I lined my foot up to the board trying to ajust my aim. After I did this a couple of times, I took 2 steps away from the board, focused my Chi (energy) took a fast step, and thrusted my foot out against the board.

"HAYA!" I yelled as I hit the board.

"Pop!" went the board, but it didn't break.

After this happened about 3 times Ta na Kim gave me my board back and told me to sit down in line. Finally, after about 10 minutes he called me up again.

"You only get 2 chances Nathan," he said calmly.

I did the same process as I had before.

"HAYA!" I yelled as I hit the board, but it didn't break.

"Last chance Nathan," he said calmly.

I looked into his eyes as he held the board in front of me, and focused every ounce of Chi I had left. Then with a sudden burst of energy I kicked the board, Keyoped (yelled), and finally broke the board! Everybody cheered and clapped, and thus it is the end of my day in the wide world of sports.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Meets the Standard (Score of 4): *The following two papers scored a 4 in Fluency, thus meeting the standard. The writing in both pieces does have a natural sound when read aloud, and the reader can move easily through the piece. Sentence patterns are somewhat varied, but connections between phrases or sentences may be less than fluid.*

I love my indian dress. It is my favorite and most loved thing I own. Whenever I think about it, it makes me smile. My Grandma gave it to me when I was only 8 years old. When I told her it didn't fit me she only laughed and told me it would some day. Now I am 11 years old and fit it perfectly. This time the only thing I'm worried about is growing out of it.

My indian dress is very beautiful to. On it is many beautiful, colored beads. When I walk in it, it jingles and makes all sorts of nice sounds. It is made of real buckskin and has a big eagle branded on the back of it. When I look at it I think of how much time the person who made my dress must have put into it. I appreciate it and hope in the future nothing will happen to my dress.

I hope that I will be able to pass my dress on to my granddaughter. If I will be able to I hope that she will appreciate it as much as I do now. Maby even if I can't pass it on to my grandaughter in the future, I will still have a special place for it in my own heart.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The next paper also meets the standard for Fluency. In this piece, fluency is quite a bit stronger in the first two paragraphs, but sentence beginnings and patterns in the third paragraph are too much the same.

Once in the deep dark jungle thair lived a monkey named Goerge. He was a very prideful monkey. So prideful that one day it could lead him into danger. One day Goerge's friend Ape made a bet with Goerge, Ape said "I bet you won't go in to the deepest and darkest part of the jungle. Ho ya I betcha I will. Ape thought a minute. If you don't go you'll be a wimp for the rest of your life.

Goerge set off and as he got deeper and deeper it got darker and darker. CRACK! SNAP! Goerge whirled around and out of the bushes came a Bear in total outrage! Goerge ran up the nearest tree. The Bear tried to follw him but failed. Goerge could not get down because the Bear keeped paceing around the tree.

Goerge stayed in the tree for many days. Then one day to Goerge's suprise the Bear fell asleep. He knew that he could not go down. So instead he swung from tree to tree. Goerge returnd home swinging from tree to tree. Goerge had found he liked it. Goerge told his family and friends about his adventure. And from that day monkeys swing from tree to tree.

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Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 3): *The writing in the following two papers "tends to be mechanical rather than fluid." In the first piece, even though there is some variety in sentence structures and beginnings, the last two-thirds of the piece contains repetitious sentence patterns, and the sentences are roughly the same length. When read aloud, the piece overall sounds somewhat choppy.*

My uncle Bob gave me a stuffed dog. It is like a doll except it is filled with cotton. It is 11 years old. Because my uncle gave it to me in the hospital after I was born. I really want to keep it with me for the rest of my life. It means alot to me. The ears are dark brown and hang over his head. The body is plump and chubby around the tummy. When it gets to the arms it thins up. It is very cozy. The body is a lighter brown then the ears. The fur on it , is kinda rough. But it is also soft at the same time. His arms are floppy. His legs are fatter than his arms. The head is not as floppy as the arms and legs. The eye's are shiny and dark. It's nose is a grayish color, also is hard. His tail is rough and round. It is kinda small. It is 18 1/2 inches tall, and that's my stuffed dog.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The next piece also scored a 3 in Fluency, falling short of the standard. The first part of the paper is relatively fluent, but it falls into repetitive beginnings and structures for the remainder of the piece.

I think you should be able to run in the halls if you are late to something. You will beable to get to class from reses. Sometimes you get in trouble if you are late. Sometimes you miss some stuff.

I know say this was made up so kids wont fall by hitting tables and get hurt.

But if you're late you'll get in trouble. but if you're late you should be able to run in the halls.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 2): *The paper that follows received a score of 2 for Fluency because the sentence patterns are so repetitious.*

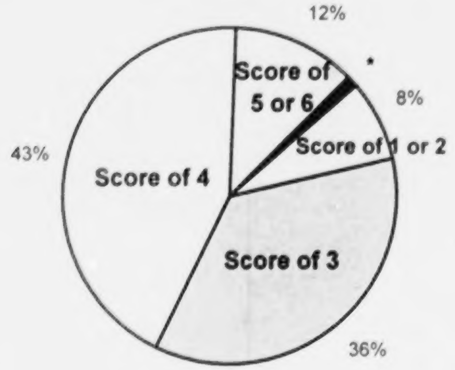
When it is raining you could play your sega if you Have one. our you could play with your pet if you Have one. our you could play a board game if you Have one. our you could clean your room. our you could bug your sister. our you could play with your Toys. our you could bug your mom. our you could wacth cartoons. our go over to friends. Thats what you do on a rainy day.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Conventions

In 1997, the average score for fifth graders on the trait of Organization was 3.6. Overall, 55% of the scores received met the standard (a 4 or above) with 12% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 9. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 66-67.

Score Distribution at Grade 5: Conventions, 1997



* = NS received a score distribution of 1%.

Sample Papers

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 5 or 6): *Both of the following papers exceed the standard for Conventions. The first one demonstrates exceptionally strong control of conventions for a fifth grader, especially considering the level of attempt in such a long and complex piece. This writer utilizes quite a range of conventions, including dialogue with direct quotations and correct indents, questions, some difficult spelling words (whimpered, impatiently), compound and complex sentences, and an internal appositive. Errors are few: "swund" instead of "swung," "Silversteen" instead of "Silverstein," "Q" instead of "cue," a couple of missing internal commas, and a few other minor mistakes. There is not much need for editing.*

My heart beat quickly as I walked side by side with Anna.

"Aren't you scared?" I asked. At the mention of scared the butterflies in my stomach flitted up anew.

"Yes, what if I forget a line?" Anna whimpered. We had reached the door of the assembly room, and I saw Serena going inside. I caught the door before it swund shut, and looked into the empty room

"You'll do alright, it's just me who will forget my lines," I reassured Anna. We stepped into the huge echoy room. I ran over my lines for the skit we were doing in the school talent show. The skit was a long poem Shel Silversteen wrote. John Walden, the director, was on the stage shouting orders to everyone.

We walked timidly up to the front of the room to be with the other nervous children.

"I'm going to die," Serena predicted.

"No, I am," Anna contradicted her. I looked toward the door just as a class entered.

"Oh, my gosh, look," I gasped pointing to the slowly moving class.

"Come on, girls," the director called impatiently putting a hand on Anna's shoulder and guiding us toward the stage. Serena peeked out at the audience. She let the curtain fall back quickly.

"There must be 1,000 people out there," she exclaimed. The announcer was already on stage.

"Performed by Sara Roberts, Anna Rodgers, and Serena Black," he finished. Anna and Serena walked on stage and began talking.

"That's my Q," I thought, and the skit began. It went very well for the most part, except that I was careful not to look at the audience, but otherwise all was great.

I sat in the car looking out the window at the blue sky.

"That skit you did was wonderful," my mom said. I leaned back against the seat and sighed.

"Thanks," I whispered, "It was hard work."

* * * * * * * * * * *

The piece that follows also exceeds the standard for Conventions. It, too, attempts quite a range of conventions very successfully. End punctuation is flawless (the only fragment, which appears in the first paragraph, is effective), and internal commas are used when necessary, for the most part. Parentheses are used correctly, dialogue is employed successfully, and even difficult words are spelled correctly (e.g., infomercial, whopping, announcer). Exclamation points are probably overused, but the author is clearly trying to convey a sense of excitement at having broken a world record.

You may not believe me, but I, Karina Goss, finished setting a record for holding my breath underwater! In my backyard pool no less!

How did this 10 ½ minute breath come about? I'll tell you! I was watching T.V. Sunday afternoon and just plain bored out of my mind! Finally I realized just how close I was to going over the edge when I volunteered to fold laundry with my mom! As I sat on the couch sorting through underwear I saw an infomercial about setting and breaking records. (I didn't pay much attention to it because the last infomercial I saw was for a gas-powered globe of the world that spun by itself!) "Big deal!" I sighed. Just then my little brother came in and saw the announcer on the T.V. begin to stand on his head!

"Cool!!" he exclaimed. The announcer went on. "If I remained like this for another hour or so, I could set a record! Yes 'folks' You too can obtain fame, fortune and be the envy of all your friends! Uh-huh! I said fortune! For every record you set or break another you win a whopping $50.00!!! Just send away for this kit and free book to help you get started. Call NOW!

By this time my bother was looking very interested.

"Wow! That's neat! Can we get one of those Mom? Puullleeeaassee?" begged my brother. "Well..." she considered. "I have been wanting a Guinness Book for sometime. And that's not a bad price, I guess."

"So...yes?" promted my brother. "Write down the number and I'll talk to your dad."

"Yeesss!"

Four weeks later it came. No one paid much attantion to it except my brother, who fell in love with it. He begged me to try to break a record and I finally gave in.

Friday afternoon when I came home from school, I tried to break the sustained breathing record. I did! I sent a report to the Guiness company with my parents' signatures and got the $50.00! But that wasn't the best part. The BEST part was just breathing again.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Meets the Standard (Score of 4): *The following two pieces meet the standard for Conventions. In the first piece about the formation of the Grand Canyon, the writer shows control of basic conventions. "End-of-sentence punctuation is correct, while internal punctuation is sometimes incorrect.... Minor errors, while noticeable, do not impede readability." These include such errors as the omission of commas before direct quotes, inconsistent capitalization of Grand Canyon, the misspelling of "muged," and the omission of apostrophes in contractions a few times. There isn't much need for editing to clean up the paper, however, and there is definitely a range of conventions attempted with adequate success to make up for the errors.*

The grand canyon was built in a strange and unusual way. Once there was a group of outlaws who prepared to hijack a train and steal all the valuable items from the passengers. They saw the smoke bellowing out of the smoke stack. The leader of the band exclaimed "Theres no place to hide! If they see us at all they will know we are bandits and speed up and theres no way we can catch them." Another member said "I know, we can skip this one and build a tremendous pit and hide in there as a base!"

It sounded like a good idea to him so he said "ya, so lets start diggin' a pit!"

So the whole gang went and stole some shovels and started digging. Pretty soon the pit was ten feet deep and twenty feet wide. When a mail carrier came he said "what a grand canyon."

So of course they muged him and sent him on his way. But he still told his friend it was a fascinating thing. Soon more and more people came to see this "Grand Canyon" being built. The leader said lets give up robberies and make this a national landmark!"

So all year long they dug, and dug, and dug, and dug until it was the Grand Canyon. All the spare dirt formed the Rocky Mountains.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The following paper also scored a 4 in Conventions. This piece contains few errors; it is very clean in terms of mechanics, despite a few minor spelling errors (e.g., "alot," "complemented"). However, "a wide range of conventions is not demonstrated," something that is required for a piece to earn a score of 5 or 6. This paper is comprised of fairly simple sentences that require little, if any, internal punctuation. The level of attempt, in other words, is fairly safe, but it definitely meets the standard.

My great grandma gave me a very special doll. She was a very attractive doll. I named the gorgeous doll Christine.

When my grandma died my family was very gloomy. I got alot of her things, but my favorite is the porcelain doll.

Christine has a perfume smell the same as my grandma. The perfume she was wearing had the beautiful scent of peach

Christine's dress is lavender and white. Her collar is a lace that has flowers sewed on the collar. The flowers look like little roses. I wish I had a garment like it.

Christine sits on my dresser and always gets complemented. Sometimes I just sit and gaze at her and think of my grandma. I don't want to touch Christine because I don't want to break her. it just wouldn't be the same without Christine. I am just getting trough my grandmas's death. I think of all the good times we have had and it always makes me feel better.

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Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 3): *In the following two pieces, the writers show only "limited control of standard writing conventions." The first piece has a strong voice, but spelling of even everyday words is often incorrect ("goes," "threw," "trainer"), and even a* *word that appeared in the prompt itself is misspelled ("Guiness"). End-of-sentence punctuation is flawed in several places, and internal punctuation is frequently flawed. There is "significant need for editing."*

"Wow, look at her go," The emused audence roared.

Rowdy, the bull I am riding is tromendously enormouse. He ways about seven hundred pounds. His animal shin looks like an old regeuly cow but it's brown spots. His blood shot bright beety eyes stare at me when I saddle him up.

Denise and Diane are my two traners. Denise has dirty blond hair and muddy walnut brown eyes. Dianes hair is dishwater blond, her eyes are dark, drab, dove chocolate brown.

I pracktis in a large coroul with Rowdy, so when I go to the nationals I'll win first place.

About two months later Rowdy and I were in Texas at the nationals. It was time. Rowdy stood in his room, where I was ready to hop on him and rock and ride! The gate opened, Rowdy rambunkshously rip roared out of the little room. I hung on tight like a rubberban stretched as far as it gos. Rowdy bucked and was balling. This had been the very first time I've competed in the nationals. I didn't want to look like a fool and fall off, so I through my hat into my hand and wayed it back but not to close to the bulls territory. The buzzer went off for the eight seconds. I jumped off eagerly so Rowdy wouldn't step on me.

The judge anounced my name and gave my the worlds largest trofy.

One year later Rowdy and I were in The Guineness Book of world records.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The following paper also earned a score of 3 in Conventions. The writing "demonstrates limited control of conventions,...and errors begin to impede readability." End-of-sentence punctuation is usually correct (although not always; the first word group is a fragment, and there are a couple of comma splices). Spelling errors distract the reader, and overall, there is "significant need for editing." (A strength of this paper is its sincere voice.)

One day When I lived in Cedarbrook. I was sleeping on my bunkbed. The reson I fell off my bed was that I was dreaming that I was being chased by someone. Then I rolled over and went flying down, and hit a easel in my room. When I fell and hit the easel I started daddy!! My mom didn't stay came, but my dad was peceful.

When we got to the hospitable it took about 30 seconds to get me into a room, Mom siad that I looked like Wofe on Startrak (because the easel hit right above the eyes). I didn't belve her so she got a mirroer. I really did look like Wofe, I started to laugh but that hurt so I stoped.....

The next day I was fine, but my haed hurt more than it ever hade before.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 1): *In its original handwritten form, the first statement in the following paper could not be decoded by most readers because of the errors in Conventions. However, readers highly skilled in reading student penmanship figured out that the first sentence meant, "I think a rule should be ? for running in the hallway..." Nevertheless, "numerous errors in usage, spelling, capitalization and punctuation repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. In fact, the severity and frequency of errors are so overwhelming that the reader finds it difficult to focus on the message and must reread for meaning...There is an extensive need for editing."*

I Think a rule shud be broing for ruing in the holey sume times Becues same pepler haveto go sume were so plese let us do it. thank you.

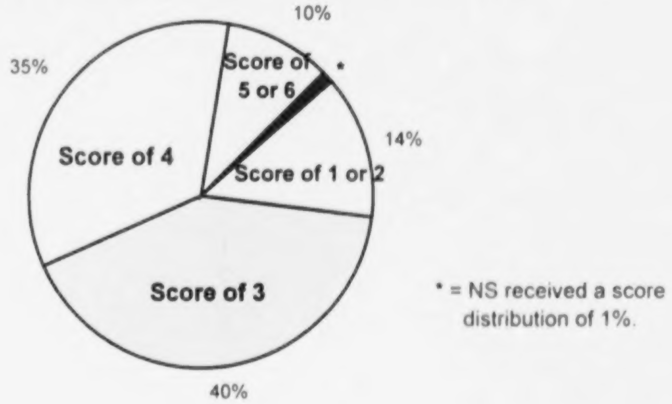
Grade 3

Performance Standards for the first benchmark (or third grade) are different from those of the other benchmarks. To meet the standard, third graders must earn a **score of 3** (rather than 4, as for the other benchmarks) in the traits of Ideas and Content, Organization, and Conventions.

Ideas and Content

In 1997, a statewide writing assessment was done only at the grades of 5, 8, and 10. Therefore, the chart below contains the information for 1996 when the last statewide third grade assessment occurred. In 1996, the average score for third graders on the trait of Ideas and Content was 3.4. Overall, 85% of the scores received would have met the current standard for the third grade benchmark on this particular trait (a 3 or above). In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 9. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 66-67.

Score Distribution at Grade 3: Ideas and Content, 1996



* = NS received a score distribution of 1%.

Sample Papers

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 5 or 6): *The following papers both exceed the standard for Ideas and Content. The first, a personal narrative about a time the author was surprised, is "clear, focused, and interesting. It holds the reader's attention. Main ideas stand out and are developed by supporting details suitable to audience and purpose." The topic is not only thoroughly explained, but the writer "shares insights" at the end by mentioning what she has learned from this experience.*

A time when I was surprised was last year.

I was rollerskating with my best friend Sarah on my drive way. I was practicing my new trick, skating and then jumping, and then skating again.

I guess I was going too fast, or maybe I was just being too careless, but anyway, I tripped over a rock and went flying. As I fell, I put out my right hand to catch myself. I landed with a thud. Bolts of pain shot up my arm.

Sarah, who had been watching in horror, zoomed to the front door to alert Mom. I was lying on the ground. I couldn't stop moving it hurt so bad. We got my skates off and limped into the house. I had been wearing knee-pads, so my knees were o.k., but the palms of my hands were a dirty red with gritty blood.

Mom wahsed off my hands and laid some ice on my writst. I winced. Then she called the doctor, and off we went to Kaiser, Sarah too. When we got there we marched strait into the emergency room, and the lady at the counter gave me an ice bag.

Finally, it was our turn. A nurse took some x-rays, (that was weird) and sent me back out again. The x-rays showed I had sprained my right wrist in the fall.

Oh gosh, I thought. How in the world am I going to write? Writing was hard. My index and middel fingers were enclosed in the cast, so I slipped a pencil between my thumb and the cast, and tried to write. It didn't come out too neat, thats for sure, but I painstakingly copyed the alphabet. Numbers came easier. They didn't have so many curves.

Somehow, I lived through school, and after a week I got my cast off.

I still rollerskate with Sarah, but I'm much more careful.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The second paper to exceed the standard in Ideas and Content is a good example also of what some third graders can do with the persuasive mode.

I belive my class is capable of having a class pet. And since hamsters are so easy to take care of, I thought we could have a hamster. The class could agree on a fundraiser to earn the money for the food, hamster, water bottle and cage, along with the woodchips for the bottom of the cage.

Hamsters are very clean animals. So they are manageable. They are also fun to take care of and are fun to hold during free-time. Hamsters don't bite hard enough to hurt somebody while they are holding the hamster or trying to pick it up to hold it.

Also they are very quiet, and will usually not make too much noise, to disturb someone who is working very hard, or thinking very hard.

They are all cute and furry and fun to hold so the class could probably decide on one or two cute furry hamsters and then agree on a name to give them. They could live in the cage our class has earned the money for. It would also be a wonderful and fun learning experience for everybody in the class. I sure hope we can get a hamster as a class pet.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 4): *All three of the following papers exceed the standard for third graders in Ideas and Content because they are "clear and focused. The reader can easily understand the main ideas, and supporting details are relevant, although they may be overly general or limited in places." The first piece is in the expository mode, and the writer definitely explains quite clearly what his favorite toy looks like and why he wishes he had it.*

My favorite toy is still in a store. I liked it, but now I suppose it's been bought already. It was red, yellow, blue, and green. It is very hard to explain, although I think I can describe it right now: It looked like a pyramid, but don't get the idea it was solid. The pyramid was made up of colorful pipes. They were like tinkertoys but plastic. The plastic tinkertoys (I will call them that.) were made into four triangles. The triangles were stuck together at the top. There were only 8 tinkertoys used to make the triangles. The triangles together made a pyramid. Not only could it be made into a pyramid, it could be made into any other shape imaginable. If I had bought it it would have been smart because the next day our class had a test. There was a whole page where you had to make up different shapes. Guess why I needed it?

* * * * * * * * * * *

The next paper also scored a 4 in Ideas and Content. This is a personal narrative that explains very clearly (despite an organizational lapse) how the author got a new watch after losing her first one.

One time I lost my watch. It was not a very pleasant seen when I got home. My dad got really mad at me. He said that he had paid a lot of money just to get me that watch. It was a very nice watch that I had, and I didn't like the fact that I lost it myself. It had Minnie mouse on the watch and the color of the watch was red. Then one day my dad bought a watch for my cousin. It was like mine, only that it was black and it had Mickey mouse on it. My dad was going to give my cousin the watch for his birthday but my grandma said that he probably he couldn't tell time yet because my cousin is only five years old. Now my dad was wondering who to give it too. When I heard about this I started pleading to him if I could have the watch since I lost my other one. I still haven't found that watch yet. I lost it on the bus. The next morning I asked the busdriver if she found a red watch on the bus that night, because she usually cleans up the bus at night. I thought she might have found my watch. Well I was pleading to my dad so much that he just got tired of it. Finally he gave me the watch. I was so happy then that I got the watch. It seems that I wear it all the time now. I am still very happy now that I got the watch I wanted.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The third paper that scored a 4 in Ideas and Content is also a personal narrative–one that illustrates the benefits of the analytic approach to assessing writing because it has significant weaknesses in traits such as organization and conventions; however, this writer includes relevant detail that develops the topic and holds the reader's attention.

On November 21 a frosty cold night my dog Frisky had her puppies. The puppies will be pure bred miniature snosaus as. The first puppy that came out had a lot of trouble. It was Frisky's first time being a mother so she did not no how to take the sack off. But he made it. The second one that came out had no trouble at all. Mirecal the male and Cherokee the female were doing fine. But thay hardly looked like dogs. Thay looked more like pigs. becass thay had short legs and a big head and a long snout. Why did I name them what I did? I rally injoyed the song "Cherokee Natom" and that is why I named Cherokee. I named Mirecal Mirecal from his tragic accident at birth.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Meets the Standard (Score of 3): *The following two papers do (barely) meet the standard for third graders in Ideas and Content. The reader in both cases "can understand the main ideas, although they may be overly broad and simplistic, and the results may not be effective. Supporting detail is often limited, insubstantial, overly general, or occasionally off-topic," as it is in the first paper.*

I am an orange cat that always gets into trouble and mischief. I like to catch mice and birds. I also play with yarnballs. I eat Friskys cat food with extra chunks. My name is Pumpkin. One day I was walking in the garden and I saw a little green bug. I chased it. It hopped every where. It looked tasty so I ate it, but it did not taste very good. Then I went home and went to sleep. I am never going to eat little green bugs ever again.

* * * * * * * * * * *

This next paper has clear main ideas with some relevant support and therefore meets the standard for third grade.

One night a long time ago my parent's said they had a surprise for me. My mom said they found a pony in the add. I said what kind they said a Welsh pony. I stayed up most of the night thinking about her. Then it was noon my mom and dad said come get in the car. When we got there I got out of the car. My dad asked the lady if I could ride her. She said yes. Then I asked her what the pony's name was, she said Snowdrop. I've had her for about a year now. And I'm going to start taking her to shows.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 1 or 2): *Most third graders who do not meet the standard for Ideas and Content have a problem with developing their ideas; there are insufficient details. Sometimes, however, as in the following paper, the main idea may be somewhat clear (after some inferences by the reader), but the problem is "irrelevant details that clutter the text" and a lack of focus and control.*

It all started why I was at school. Kyle and I were talking about he was at my house. Kyle was taking to Will that I had a hottub. Frrrrrrrr! The wistle bluw! Recess was over. Then Will said, "Your house sounds pretty fun?? I said "Will? I thaught you said you probbly woulden't want to go to my house. Why do you want to go? You have a hottub. Oh. I'm glad you want to go. He was coming on Saturday. He came. A few minuts after he came We watched a G.I joe video. I have nine of them. The video we watched was the fun house. It't about Cobra kipnaping siantests. G.I.joe have to save them. After that Will was playing Mario paint. He druw Mario. He druw him a little wuird. He druw a grew and purrple mustach, eer wax in the eer. He druw a dinasor throing up on him. He had a throing up problem, a nose problem, an eerwax problem, and a toe jam problem. We went into the hottub. I did sneakey trik on him. We took G. I. joes in the hottub. He din't want all of his in the hottub. I told Will close his eius. I put all of Will's G.I. joes in the hottub. We played a game in the hottub. I tried to pull Will down into the water. Will tried to push me down. Will kept on wining and wining.

* * * * * * * * * * *

This next paper is a good example of one in which the writer's "attempts at development are minimal...; the paper is too short to demonstrate the development of an idea." There is "insufficient detail."

Exercise is good for you - How to exercis to be healthy - Do not eat junk food.
If you exercise everyday really strong.
If you exercise evre day you will be real healthy so you wont get sick.

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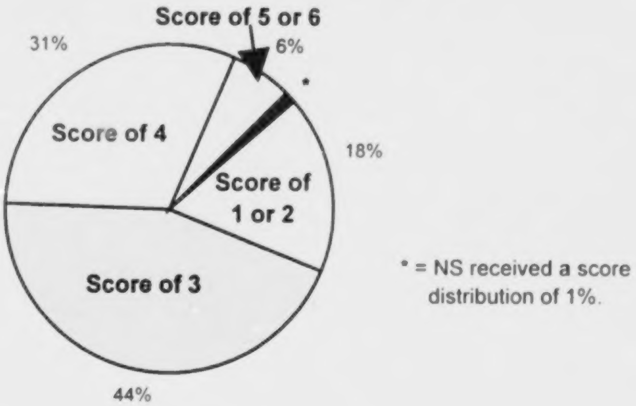
Organization

In 1997, a statewide writing assessment was done only at the grades of 5, 8, and 10. Therefore, the chart below contains the information for 1996 when the last statewide third grade assessment occurred. In 1996, the average score for third graders on the trait of Organization was 3.3. Overall, 81% of the scores received would have met the current standard for the third grade benchmark on this particular trait (a 3 or above). In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 9. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 66-67.

Score Distribution at Grade 3: Organization, 1996



Sample Papers

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 5 or 6): *The following paper is quite an extensive undertaking for a third grader. An imaginative piece, it follows a chronological order that "enhances the central idea...and moves the reader through the text." The beginning is inviting and "draws the reader in," there is a "satisfying sense of resolution," and there are "smooth, effective transitions...Details fit where placed."*

It was a dark night at the beach. I was all alone. I had gotten seperated from my family. Because I got lost. My skin was shaking nervously and I was freezing.

Then suddenly there was a light. I pinched myself to see if I was dreaming. Then I saw the light again. This was weird!

Then someone whispered my name, Rhooobeert. It was coming from the ocean, Rhoobert. I started to back away when I saw a splash! There right in front of me was a huge fullgrown blue whale! And it was talking to me! This must be a dream I thought.

Really the blue whale was a huge white shark in disguise. He was tring to luer me into a trap. I knew that he was a shark because of his sharp teeth.

He asked me to go with him. But when I said, "No," his tail lit up, and before I knew it I was in his power and walking toward him. He made a splash with his glowing tail, and there was a glass cage infront of me. The next thing I knew, I was locked in the cage. He hooked up a breathing pipe to a hole in the cage, and took off his disguise. He pushed me into the water, and took me deep under the sea.

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This is getting creepy I thought. He stopped when he got to a cave under the sea. He set me down in the cave. I heard him mummble, "my first slave." "What," I said, I'm not going to be your slave, never ever! "SILENCE," he said! If you don't be my slave you will die! You've got 10 minutes to decide, and when your times up I will break the cage open, and you won't be able to breathe. He poked a hole in my cage, and my cage started filling up with water.

Time was flying by fast. I kneeled down to cry but I didn't. Mabie if I spear his glowing tail he will lose his power I thought. But to make the rope to get the spear, I would have to take off all my clothes, and tie them together. But that would make me nakid I thought. This made me let out a laugh. What are you lauging about he said. Nothing I said in a week voice. He turned around again. Quickly I took off my clothes, made my rope, and got the spear, then I hid the spear in my cage. I was all set. He turned around and said "times up." Just before he broke the cage I threw the spear through the hole and through his tail, and before I knew it I was home again. I was very happy that was over with, but I was nakid.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 4): *The following three pieces also exceed the standard for third graders. "Organization is clear and coherent...with clear sequencing." To earn a score of 4, papers must have "a recognizable, developed beginning" (even though it may not be particularly inviting), and "a developed conclusion" (even though it may not be subtle). Transitions must be present, although they may not be the most graceful. Such descriptors certainly apply to the first piece.*

Hi I'm Snowball. I'm white, furry, warm, and I like people. They like me because I'm a cute and cuddly kitten.

I eat fish, mice, and birds but I always catch my food. Some people feed me cat food when they find me in the cold.

I live in a tree. There is a little nest I built out of branches, twigs, and mud with clean leaves sticking on so the mud dosn't get my white fur dirty!

The branch my nest was on was so old that it collapsed and my nest was gone! I was doomed! So I ventured out. Soon I found myself on a ship rocking me back and fourth! I found people that took care of me until we stopped. We stopped in Maui! They let me off and I made my nest again.

First, I made a little deck sort-of thing. The deck had a little barrel to put the coconuts in. All the coconuts in the tree we're in the barrel I made. Next, I got sand, mud, palm tree leaves, twigs, branches, grass, and little water. Then, I made everything but the middle. I mixed the mud and sand and put all of it on the bottom. I put the Palm tree leaves on the mud so I wouldn't get my white fur dirty. I lived near the Hotels and there were pools very near. The Palm Tree I lived in was near the ochen and the Pool.

I met many new friends and stayed for the rest of my life!

* * * * * * * * * * *

The second piece to score a 4 in Organization is also coherent, with clear sequencing. It is chronological, with a sense of beginning and ending.

One day I was sitting on the living room couch when I heard the telephone ring. I ran to get it. I said "Hello this is Emma." The lady on the other end said "Can I talk to your mom please? "Sure" I said. I went and got my mom. She started talking to the lady for five minutes then ten. Then when she got off the phone I asked her "Who was that?" "It was my cousin Lizzy from Indiana." she said. "In about two weeks we are going to go to a pizza place and eat dinner with Lizzy and her kids." "Lizzy has five doughters Gia, Cory, Marie, Liza, and Lily," said my mom. Two weeks went by quickly and finally it was the day. I was so excitited and wild. When we got there I was surprised. Gia and I were running around playing games. Then our delicious pizza came. Soon it was time to go. We used our tickets, got our prizes and left. I was very unhappy. My mom says this summer we can go to Indiana and visit them. Mabye you can meet them sometime.

* * * * * * * * * * *

This last paper, written in the expository mode, received a split score of 3/4 in Organization. Again, there is a clear beginning and sense of closure, with a body that is easy to follow. It borders on a score of 3 because "placement of details is not always effective" (a couple of details show up somewhat repetitiously throughout the paper).

The first time I made a paper crane I felt so proud of myself! The crane was a beautyful red. A red like the red in a sunset, just before the sun goes down and out of sight.

The crane felt perfictly smoth, exept for a little bump in it's tail. And for the first time I had accomplished something I had been trying to do for a long time. And it felt so good!

I used the carne (since it was fragle) to decorate. And to remind me of how good I felt when I made my first paper crane. I know my friends don't rilly care about it that much. But they don't know how long I tried. And how good I felt when I finlly accomplished it.

I have a lot of paper cranes now. But my favrate is a little red crane with a bump on it's tail. Allmost all of the other cranes look a lot beter than my first one. But stil a little red crane with a bump on it's tail is my favrate.

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Meets the Standard (Score of 3): *The following two papers both show that "an attempt has been made to organize the writing; however, the overall structure is...skeletal." Beginnings and endings are present, but they are undeveloped or too obvious.*

One day my mom said "I had to play up stairs and don't look out the window." So I went up stairs to play for a cople of hours I began to get bored. So I asked if I could go to the store she said If you close your eyes and then you can go so I can have some money please mom after that she gave me some money and I went to the store I couldn't deside what to buy so I went home. When I got home there was a clown in the back yard and when I went in it was a suprise party that's why I had to do those things.

* * * * * * * * * * *

I own a kitten. She is black and white. She some times acts weird, but she is usually very camb. When I pet her she purrs very, very loud. She some times curles up in my lap and falls asleep, some times when shes a sleep and I'm petting her she has a bad dream. She stats squrming, and squrming. She wakes up and runs under my bed. she is usually nice but some times she bites, and starts kicking me. She can get very skaird. I usually sit by her in front of the heter. She atacs my dog, its very funny! I like her very much.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 1 or 2): *The following piece scored a 2 because it is "simply too short to demonstrate organizational skills." It does have a beginning, but "details seem randomly placed" and there is no ending.*

I have a toy that is a grila Alien. He is a pritty cool Alien but sum times he can be anuon but he's pritty cool. My friend's really like to play with the Alien a lot. I gave him a really radicle name it is grilue Alien. He has sortue pointey elboes and neas.

* * * * * * * * * * *

While skilled readers might detect some coherence in the following piece, the details are nevertheless "disjointed. Even after rereading, the reader remains confused." It lacks a clear beginning, transitions, and sense of closure, and therefore earned a score of 1.

Hay I like this toy.
and it can do majick hay dad.
it dusint wrok this toy.
Why son becsh Why.
it brock dad I think we sud tack it go to the shop.
Lets do it dad OK son but.
Mother will come Home.
We are Home Haym Look at my pet.
that pet is a good
can I tack my pet yes son but come Home
by dad and mom.
is He a good boy yes he is a good
Lets by are son.
Lets go Home wiet now.
that me on TV
hay dad What son do you love my pet
Yes Son but your Mother is have a baby.
is it a boy or gril.
it a boy yes its a boy.
Why its a boy dad the dordr said
Lets by some toy.

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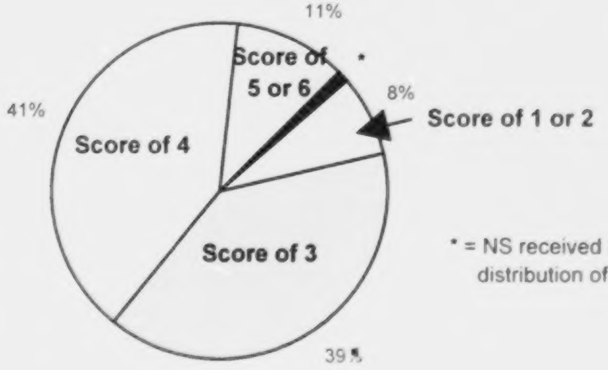
Voice

In 1997, a statewide writing assessment was done only at the grades of 5, 8, and 10. Therefore, the chart below contains the information for 1996 when the last statewide third grade assessment occurred. Although students are not required to receive a minimum score to meet a standard in the area of Voice, this trait is scored to provide additional information on students' writing. In 1996, the average score for third graders on the trait of Voice was 3.5—the highest average for any of the traits, with 91% of the scores received being a 3 or above. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 9. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 66-67.

Score Distribution at Grade 3: Voice, 1996



* = NS received a score distribution of 1%.

Sample Papers

High (Score of 5 or 6): *The first paper that follows is a good example of a successful expository piece with appropriately strong voice. The writer explains how to have a healthy (and cheerful) goldfish, primarily with instructions about how to clean a tank. The writer definitely "seens committed to the topic, and there is a sense of 'writing to be read.'" In addition, the writing is "expressive, engaging, and sincere...with a strong sense of audience."*

I have a cheerful and healthy Goldfish! Do you know how I keep him nice and helthy? I'll just tell you how!

It's very simple you just feed the Goldfish a pinch of food every day and wash his tank out once a month.

If you don't know how to wash the fish tank here's how! Just get a parent or a grown-up to move the fish tank over by a sink. Then get another bowl and fill it with water. About the temperature of the old water in the fish tank. Scoop up the fish with a Strainer (a bowl with holes in it) and put a towel in it. So the Little rocks dont go through the strainer. Then dump every thing that is in the fish bowl into the strainer so the water goes down the drain and the rocks dont. After that scrub the tank (inside and out.) with soap and water. Then wipe real good!

To wash the rocks just rinse with water alot of times. Then get the rocks and put them in the tank. After that fill the tank up with water. About the temperature of the old water. Then put the fish back in the tank. After that move the fish tank back to it's original place.

Now you have a cheerful and healthy fish like me!

* * * * * * * * * * *

High (Score of 4/5): *The next piece is written in the imaginative mode, and again, the writing is engaging and lively. While it has some weaknesses in conventions, the reader can "discern the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction...the writing shows originality and excitement."*

I'm a littel kitten sleping by the fire then sudinly my oner screm's "MOUSE"! I jumped up I bolt in to the kitchen. My oner says "good snow flake your here." "Get that mouse" I meaw "my plesere". I start runing aftore that mouse. He jump's up on a window ledge I jumped to but I coulded stop myself. I got flung out of the window! the good thing about it is ther was a pipe on the side of the building my clae came out in a flash I grabed the pipe. I was lucky I thot. Then the pipe started to come luse then before i new it I was falling the pipe was right a buve me. I frecked. I shut my eyes hoping it would be over soon. I landed. I opened my eyes. I said were am I. Ther was a lot of clouds around me. I looked down I could not believe my eyes. I was floting then I got zaped to earth. I was happy.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The next piece is a personal narrative in which the writer "seems committed to the topic." The writing, with plenty of feeling about an escaped pet frog, is "expressive, engaging, and sincere."

My frog got lost because my frog jumped out of my brother's hands. I was mad at my brother. I was also sad. We looked for the frog. We could not find her. I was scared because she was a handycaped frog. I was in my room thinking of what to do to find my frog. After a hafe hour. I felt a tug on my hair and I looked down it was my frog. I was so happy. I put her in my tank. I told my mom I found my frog and I said sorry to my brother for being so mad at him. I decided not to take her out intill a long time.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Mid-Range (Score of 4): *The piece that follows is an expository piece done with an imaginative narrative to make the point–quite sophisticated in terms of mode for a third grader! This writer seems committed to the topic of health and fitness.*

I was at my friends house, Nick. I rang the doorbell his mother ansered. She showed me into the living room. Wnere Nick was sitting in front of the T.V. I went over to Nick and said "want to come to my house tomorrow at five? He ansered "Sorry I can't or I would miss Wonder years." That was it. I went over to the T.V and turned it off. "Come on" I said were going to the Work Out House." "Why?" asked Nick. "because you need to get some exercise." At the Work Out House Nick and I played basket ball and soccer and also base ball. After we left the Work Out House insted of a parent picking us up we walked. Nick told me how much fun he had. Over the next few days Nick and I did basket ball swimming base ball and once a day a walk from Nick's house to the Work Out House and back again. We also got healthy food like carrots, selrey, brockley, pears, apples, oranges, bananas, and cantalop. One day when Nick came to play basket ball I told him that I had good news. "What" he asked. Well my mom signed us up for basket ball, I said excitedly. Nick looked kind of sad. "What's the matter?" I asked. "Well I don't think I can make the team" said Nick. "Sure you can I said we can practice at school. "Okay" said Nick. Four times a week Nick and I played basket ball down at are school. Nick got better each time we practiced. Then the tryouts came. I hoped Nick would make the team. I

asked the coach when we would see who made the team. He said tomorrow the list would be up on the bullietin board.
The next day we rode are bikes down to the school to see if we made the team. I told Nick it dosen't matter if you make the tam or not because I only asked my mom to sign up because I thought it would be fun way to exercise. Nick said "Now I get it except one thing why do you need to exercise?" "Oh, that's easy" I said to keep active and to help your brain and also to keep your body in shape. "Thanks" said Nick. Now I get why you should exercise. And that is why you should exercise.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Mid-Range (Score of 3): *The next two pieces had quite a bit of potential for a more personal voice, which would have been appropriate in both cases. The first is a personal narrative about finding a fawn, but the writer missed the opportunity to bring the incident to life.*

Once I was walking through the woods then all of a sudden something moved then I walked to where I saw it move and I saw a mom deer and then I saw a new born deer then I took the new born deer home and gave it some milk. Then my mom got home and "said" shat is that smell? I "said" a babby deer and she "said where did you get it? in the wood's. Oh. OK. Can we keep it? I guess. Yes! I'll name it fall because it is fall. Good name. Thank's mom.

* * * * * * * * * * *

This next paper also scored a 3 in Voice. It is an imaginative piece which also misses the opportunity to write with more expressiveness.

One night I was walking on the beach alone. Suddenly there was a light shining on me.

There was a man on a boat the man said something to me but I did not understand him. The man was a pirate. The pirate shot a cannon at me but he missed me. I ran over to a huge rock.

The pirate did not see me go over to the rock. The pirate was heading toward the beach when they got to the beach the pirate and his crew tried to find me. Once they were out of sight I whent into the ship to find some treasure. I found somet reasure and I got a handfull of it. The pirates were coming back into the ship right after I got the treasure and maid a trap to make the whole ship blow up.

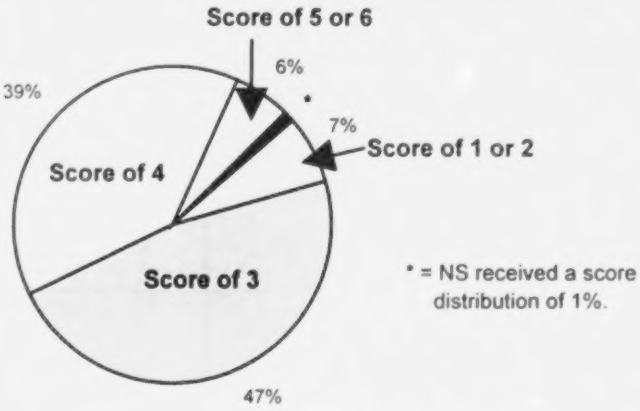
I jumped out of the ship and hid behind the same rock again. The pirates got back into the ship and went back into the middle of the sea. Right when the get into the middle of the sea the whole ship blew up. Every pirate died.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Word Choice

In 1997, a statewide writing assessment was done only at the grades of 5, 8, and 10. Therefore, the chart below contains the information for 1996 when the last statewide third grade assessment occurred. Although students are not required to receive a minimum score to meet a standard in the area of Word Choice, this trait is scored to provide additional information on students' writing. In 1996, the average score for third graders on the trait of Word Choice was 3.4. Overall, 92% of the scores received were a 3 or above. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 9. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 66-67.

Score Distribution at Grade 3: Word Choice, 1996



Sample Papers

High (Score of 5): *Despite some problems with Conventions and Sentence Fluency, the following paper incorporates strong word choices. "The writer employs a broad range of words...that convey the intended message in an interesting, precise, and natural way...Accurate, specific words...energize the writing." The snake "slithers back toward the entrance," the eagle comes "swooping down from the clouds," the scorpion "swings it's taile," and the mouse is "nibbling on a nut," among others.*

It is sunset, and I feel hungry. So I go out to look for food. (I am a snake, a rattlesnake to be exact.) I just get out of the top of my buro when I here a squeak. Yum, a mouse. I chase the mouse. I had just caught the end of it's taile, when a egle came swooping down from the clouds. It is coming straight at me. I look around for protecshon. Ah, a hole, I quickly slither down inside it. The egle starts scraching at the hole. I turn around (to go farther into the hole to be safer) but infrount of me is a scorpion. I comes toward me, it swings it's taile at me. I slither back toward the entrance, but I see the egle swooping high above me. I'm traped! Then suddenly, I here thunder rumbuling above me. It sarts to rain. And then a bolt of lightning lite up the sky. The frightend egle left immediately. Then the scorpion's tail came at me once more,

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but I slither out of the hole toward home. On the way I saw the mouse from before nibbling on a nut. I caught the mouse and aet it and he was delishus.

* * * * * * * * * * *

High (Score of 4/5): *Writing in the persuasive mode, this student employs a variety of very specific words for a third grader. They are accurate and appropriate to the topic.*

This paragraph will make you hate junk food forever. Would you like a banana split right now? Of course you would! But not after you read this paragraph! You'll be the healthiest kid in town!

If you always eat junk food your veins will get clogged with fat and you will get a heart attack. You also won't get any vitamins so your body defense systems will shut down and you won't have any protection against diseases!

Junk food is terrible! You can't eat junk food and still stay healthy. So its one or the other, and I say that everyone whould chose to be healthy!

* * * * * * * * * *

Mid-Range (Score of 4): *The next paper earned a* ***high 4*** *in Word Choice. Again, the words are specific and accurate, and even though the reader would like to see more text, it seems clear that this writer knows how to use words effectively.*

I would like to own a gibbon. They can be black, white or gray. They some times have a white fringe around there fase. In the wild they act sort of like humans. They have strong hands and feet for swinging in trees. they have a high pitch shrill voice for calling each other. They feel very furry and some times spikey.

* * * * * * * * * *

The following paper is more typical of those that score a 4. The writer uses "a variety of words that are functional and appropriate to audience and purpose." In this case, the writer explains how to make an egg sandwich, and the words work.

How to make an Egg Sandwich.

First you boil two eggs for three minutes in a pan on the stove. Then you take out the boiled eggs from the pan. Next you cut up the boiled eggs. And then you mix the boiled egg pieces in a bowl with mayonaise. After you mix up the eggs you get two pieces of bread. Now you scoop out the boiled egg pieces on to one piece of bread. Then you take the other piece of bread and spread it with the egg mix. The last thing you do is cut the egg sandwich in half for you and your friend. Then sit down and enjoy your egg sandwich together.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Mid-Range (Score of 3): *At the 3 level, words are "quite ordinary, lacking interest, precision, and variety." Words at this level often result in a sort of " 'generic' paper filled with familiar words and phrases...expression seems mundane and general." The words "work, but rarely capture the reader's interest." The paper that follows fits the description.*

Once upon a time I had a dog. His name was Peaches. He was a nice dog and let me pet him. When I peted him he jumped up on me and ran. I had to go get him but it was still fun. When we got home I fed him and then we go out and play some more. When it gets dark we go and eat dinner. After dinner we have about a ower and a half. We play and play. On Sunday I go to church and Peaches stays home. When I get home I chang and go out to play with Peaches. After we are done playing we go in and eat lunch. When I pet my dog he runs all over. My dog feels like yarn and looks like yarn. After we eat we play for the rest of the day.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Low (Score of 2/3): *The next paper borders on a score of 2 and 3 because, while it fits the description above for a score of 3, it also has characteristics of a 2 in that some words are repeated over and over.*

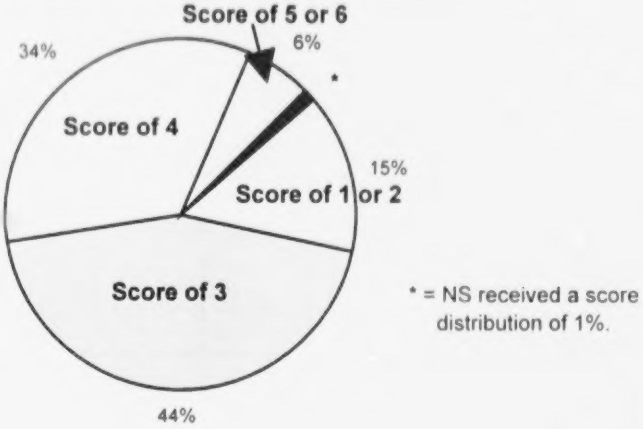
The big suprise suprised me. Because when my girl dog had puppies last week it suprised me because she only had five. It was weird she only have five puppies. When she usually has ten or nineteen puppies. That was a big suprise. The five days later two died. Well at least we have tree left over. That was a big suprise for me and my sisters, mom, and dad. That was the weirdest thing that ever happend to us.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Sentence Fluency

In 1997, a statewide writing assessment was done only at the grades of 5, 8, and 10. Therefore, the chart below contains the information for 1996 when the last statewide third grade assessment occurred. Although third graders do not have to meet a standard in the area of Sentence Fluency, this trait is scored to provide more information about a student's writing ability. In 1996, the average score for third graders on the trait of Sentence Fluency was 3.3. Overall, 84% of the scores received were a 3 or above. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 9. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 66-67.

Score Distribution at Grade 3: Sentence Fluency, 1996



* = NS received a score distribution of 1%.

Sample Papers

High (Score of 5 or 6): *The following paper is exceptional for a third grader. Perhaps most impressive about fluency is the "extensive variation in sentence structure, length, and beginnings that add interest to the text." This characteristic is less noticeable at the beginning of the piece, when several sentences contain long lists of foods, but once the lists are over, the variety begins. At the conclusion, the writer falls into a few rather rambling constructions, but overall, the piece is strong in fluency.*

Does healthy foods sound disusting? Well, they are not. Some fruits and vegatables are very tasty. There are carrots, corn, celery, potatoes, tomatoes, and lettuce. Grapes, apples, oranges, strawberries, peaches, and plums are good too. Yet fruits and vegatables aren't the only health food. Breads such as muffins, bagels, loaves, rolls, waffles, and pancakes are good for you too. Meats and meat alternatives such as nuts, chicken, eggs, and fish are wholesome for you. Dairy products are immensely healthy for you. It's still okay to eat ice cream and cake, but don't eat them so often. Why should you eat healthy food? The problem is that if you eat junk food, you're eating food you don't need. Another thing that happens is that you can get very fat, but if you eat healthy food you won't get fat very easily and get more energy. If you will be less popular, tell your friends that eating right is much better. To make sure you don't go from cookies to carrot sticks too fast, here is a process to eat right. For breakfast some toast, eggs, fruit, milk, juice, and cereal. Donuts are not a good choice. At school for lunch juice or milk, sandwiches, and a dessert is preferable. Candy, cookies, and soda isn't the best thing. For snacks I recommend crackers, fruit, vegatables, toast, maybe even dinner leftovers instead of cookies and milk. And of course at dinner try to eat everything your parents give you. If that doesn't sound satisfying, I'll give you a tip. Just because you choose to eat healthy food doesn't mean you have to be a health nut. I mean I eat healthy food, but I also eat junk food. Just don't eat so much junk food because if you do, you may have problems, so you may have a hard time making the transition by overdoing it and pushing yourself to be as thin as a wire. Yet you can stop becoming a junk food addict and start eating healthy food, so if you want to stop being a junk food addict and eat healthy food then start eating right.

* * * * * * * * * * *

While not as developed as the previous piece, the following paper scored a 5 in Sentence Fluency. It has an easy flow and rhythm, and varied sentence structure makes oral reading easy and enjoyable, with a "natural, fluent sound." More specifically, sentences are of different lengths and begin in different ways. The piece has a conversational tone to it, and it works quite well.

If you eat only junk food you will not live as long. And you want to live as long as possible so you can explore, go places, see the world! Do something with your life.

Eat good and you'll feel great about your self. Eat healthy, be healthy. You want to eat healthful so you can have energy don't you?

Eating junk food make's you...well...helpless. The junk food clogs your arterys so you can't move. Then everyone has to do stuff for you and that make's you feel bad. Right?

Eating healthy gives you energy which you can use to exercise and get fit. Ever heard of survival of the fitest? Oranges, oats, corrots, apples, corn, bananas, broccoli and tomateos taste great. Exercise and eat correctly and you will have the greatest life.

* * * * * * * * * * *

High (Score of 4/5): *The next piece, written in the imaginative mode, also exceeded the standard for fluency. Sentences have varied structure, which, for the most part, "makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable."*

Once there was a little baby kitten and her name was Nara. She was really wild and jumpy. When Nara ran she would always bumb into things. Nara didn't have much of a family, she only had a brother. And no mother or father, they died in a tornado! Her brother Alex was taking care of her. They were looking for an owner, when they heard a skipping noise, it was a little girl skipping by the lake that they were at. She saw them, she scooped them both up in her arms and went home, and that's how Nara and Alex found a new owner. .

* * * * * * * * * * *

Mid-Range (Score of 4): *Although the first paragraph of the next piece isn't as fluent as the second paragraph, the writing overall has "natural sound, and the reader can move easily through the piece." At the 4 level, "connections between phrases or sentences may be less than fluid," but sentences are somewhat varied, as they are here.*

My cat's name is Dinks. He has fur that looks like black velvet. His fur feels like velvet too. His eyes are a pale yellow.

After he gets into a cat fight, he finds a big branch or wood. Next, he sticks out his claws and sharpens them on the wood. When Dinks wants in, he will scratch the door until we let him in. If we put him out with no couse to put him out, he meows with a very sad look.

When he lays down, he does it in the sun and rolls over so I can scratch his belly. Sometimes when he does that, but doesn't want me to scratch him, he scratches me insted.

* * *

Mid-Range (Score of 3): *At this level, the "writing tends to be mechanical rather than fluid, and occasional awkward constructions may force the reader to slow down or reread," as happens in the two pieces that follow. Some passages invite fluid oral reading (e.g., "Then we put tacks in his head for eyes. I wanted to paint it but my dad said I couldn't. I said, "Oh well it is good enough.") However, other passages do not invite fluid oral reading (e.g., "It is done now but it does not fly the nose is to heavy It is a brownish color. I still have it.")*

Hi, I am Rhonda. I am proud of a wooden eagle I that I made. It looks kind of funny but I finlaly got it done. My dad gave me some fake eagle fethers. My friend and I got some wood posts we shaved them, we were not going to make eagles we were going to make fake sourds. We shaved them then my mom picked me up from his house to take me home. Acople days later I decited to sand it so it would be smooth. After tht my dad and I drilled holes for the fethers to go into and nose holes. Then we put tacks in his head for eyes. I wanted to paint it but my dad said I couldn't. I said, "Oh well it is good enough." It was done I like it alot and I was very proud of it. I showed it to my friend and he wanted to make one too. It is done now but it does not fly the nose is to heavy It is a brownish color. I still have it.

* * *

The writer of the following piece shows great promise for becoming very strong in sentence fluency. He attempts sentence structures that are sophisticated for a third grader (especially in parallel structure, both within a sentence and then again by repeating the same parallel structure in the sentence that follows.) He doesn't quite have control over the structure, however, and it ends up in a rambling construction. He also needs to vary the lengths of his sentences, including some shorter ones.

I think that some kids should and others shouldn't decide when to go to sleep.

Kids that are honest, smart and know how to take care of their health can choose when to go to sleep because the person would choose a reasonable time they would've finished all their stuff and still get enough sleep. But kids that aren't honest, smart and don't know how to take care of their health shouldn't decide because if they did they would probably choose to stay up late and they wouldn't get enough sleep and they'd be sick.

That is why I think some kids should and others shouldn't decide when to go to sleep.

* * *

Low (Score of 2): *The following two pieces scored low for Sentence Fluency. In both of them, "the writing tends to be choppy...with sentence patterns that are monotonous."*

My favorit toy is a seago see de. You can play seaga see de.

You need a cuntroll for a seago see de. You need a game for a seago see de. You need a tv to play seago see de. You need to hook the seago see de in to play it

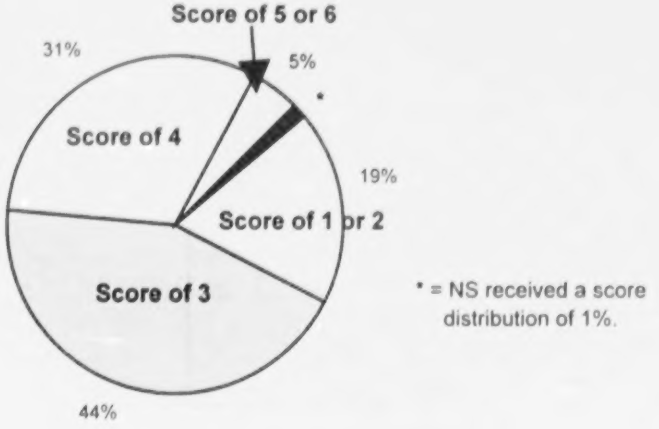
* * *

I have a cat. His name is Blackie. He is only six moths old. He looks like a skunk. He likes to bite me. He likes to sleep in the dirty clothes. He is wome. I love him. So that is the story about my cat.

Conventions

In 1997, a statewide writing assessment was done only at the grades of 5, 8, and 10. Therefore, the chart below contains the information for 1996 when the last statewide third grade assessment occurred. In 1996, the average score for third graders on the trait of Conventions was 3.2. Overall, 80% of the scores received would have met the current standard for the third grade benchmark on this particular trait (a 3 or above). In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 9. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 66-67.

Score Distribution at Grade 3: Conventions, 1996



Sample Papers

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 4 or 5): *Even though the following paper is short and further development is desirable, it demonstrates strong control of standard conventions. In addition, it actually shows "skill in using a wide range of conventions," which characterizes papers at the 5 level. End punctuation is flawless, as is capitalization. Spelling is correct except for "somthing." The writer also correctly uses internal punctuation in ways that are unusual for third graders: an appositive in the first sentence correctly set off with a pair of commas, a series of nouns correctly separated with commas in the first sentence, and several introductory phrases correctly followed by commas. The writer also correctly uses a colon, an exclamation point, and an apostrophe in a possessive. The only error is an unneeded internal comma.*

To play my favorite game, Gigglesnort, you need at least four people, a tissue, and somthing to giggle about. Then you all sit in a circle. One person then throws the tissue in the air. As soon as the tissue leaves the person's hand, everyone starts to giggle. When the tissue falls to the floor, everyone must stop giggling immediately. The one that keeps a straight face the longest, throws the tissue next round. Warning: Gigglesnort is harder than it seems. The longer you play, the harder it is to stop giggling!

* * * * * * * * * * *

The next paper also exceeds the standard with a score of 4 because in a fairly long and complex piece of writing, the author's level of attempt is considerable. He clearly has control of *end punctuation, but needs to work on internal punctuation, particularly introductory clauses. Quotations are punctuated correctly, as are possessives, and spelling is sound, with a few exceptions. The lack of paragraph breaks and indentations usually characterizes papers at the 3 level, but because of other strengths, this is a 4 paper. It has "moderate" rather than "significant" need for editing, and occasional lapses in correct grammar ("I thought...I'd see if there was any kids to play with.") are not severe enough to distort meaning or confuse the reader.*

One day I was at a hotel with my two dogs. The male's name is Bill and the female's name is Zowie. They are both purebred chows. The first part of the day was pretty fun. First I took my dogs on a walk around the hotel. Downstairs there was some kind of a party and lots of people had tuxedos and dresses on. So I thought I'd go down and see if there was any kids to play with. Unfortunately there wasn't but I still had fun talking with people that came over to pet my dogs. When I got back to my room my dogs went straight for their bowls under the sink in the batrhroom. I turned on the TV and started flipping through the channels. After about 15 minutes my mom came in and told me to go brush my teeth. So I went in the bathroom and started brushing my teeth. While I was brushing I heard Zowie growl at Bill. In just a few second they started fighting. Zowie must have been pretty mad because she was going for the neck. After a little bit of dodging Jack hid behind me. Zowie lunged at him but unfortunately she got me instead. "I can't beleive she bit me!" I screamed at the top of my lungs. Zowies fangs went at least two inches into my leg on each side. "Calm down," said my mom as she picked me up and carried me to the bed. My dad went downstairs to get something to make my leg stop bleeding. When my dad got back he was carrying a bottle of yellowish stuff. While he poured it into my cut, Zowie came over to the bed where I was laying down and started licking my face. After a while Zowie's tongue felt rough. So I told her to stop. She did but she still sat and looked at me with a pathetic face. After about three weekes I finally forgave her.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The next paper also scored a 4 in Conventions because, even though the piece is considerably shorter than the one above, the writer still "demonstrates control of standard writing conventions." Again, the level of attempt is a consideration, and this writer correctly uses quotation marks and commas in a series. Minor errors, while noticeable, do not impede readability.

I saw a light across the beach. It was light and bright as can be. I thought it was a ship. The ship came right up and landed on the beach by me. It was my mom. She wanted me to go for a ride on the ship with her, my dad, sisters, and brothers, My whole family. We sailed for a long time and went to an island. One day I was walking on the beach and a dolghin swam up to me and said, "Please come into the water and swim with me." I said, "O.K." We swam and swam for a long time. When I got out he jumped up and kissed me. We swam every day together. We lived happily ever after on the island.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Meets the Standard (Score of 3): *Errors at the 3 level "begin to impede readability," as they do in the following piece. This piece shows "limited control of standard conventions," with spelling errors, sometimes of common words, that distract the reader. End-of-sentence punctuation is usually correct.*

Do you no wat hapens on Valentines day. You get candy hearts! And lots of hugs and love. Valentines day is on Feburery 41 1994. Valentines day is fun. You get to tell secrets on valentines day. People poot hearts on ther windows wen it is valentines day. People give candy awt on valentines day. Its no ordenery candy it is speshell candy from deep down in the heart. Valentines day is a nice day from deep down in your heart.

* * * * * * * * * * *

For the same reasons cited for the previous piece, this next scored a 3 also.

Wene I was in 2nd grade I had a dog and he was called Tracker. He was a very very nice dog. We tought him to fach and roll over. And one day wene I was coming home from school he got hit by a black truck. We bared him in our backyard. We made a cross for him and I will never forget him.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 1 or 2): *Although the next piece contains spelling that is correct and a paragraph indent, it still "demonstrates little control of standard conventions" and scored a 2. There are "many end-of-sentence punctuation errors;" in fact, most of the piece is one run-on sentence, which interferes with readability and meaning.*

Once there was a boy named Brice he had a little sister named Emmie. One morning Emmie was missing from her bed Brice got up and looked for her he saw her going into the witches cabin Brice when to peek through the window and saw emmie one of the witches saw him he tried to run but he couldn't the witches pulled him in he tried to get Emmie but the witches put a spell on him he turned into a cat and he is going to Live forever!!!!

* * * * * * * * * * *

The next paper, even though many raters can understand the first two-thirds, scored a 1 in Conventions. "Numerous errors in...spelling, capitalization and punctuation repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. In fact, the severity and frequency of errors are so overwhelming that the reader finds it difficult to focus on the message and must reread for meaning."

Once there was a snak how had beat evey snak in the deserd fienly he met his mach the king cobra the cobra spit at the radle snak mising the cobra striuc the utter was dust.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Non-scorable Student Papers

For a variety of reasons, some student papers written for the Statewide Assessment are returned to students without scores. Papers that fall into one of the following categories are considered non-scorable:

Blank

The student writing folder has no writing in it. (The student may have been absent or exempted from the assessment. Occasionally, a rough draft or a pre-write written on other paper will be found enclosed in the writing folder, but unless writing appears on the designated pages, it is not scored.)

Too Short

Sometimes students do not submit enough writing to enable raters to assess it in a meaningful way. When the sample is too short, it is impossible to see how an idea is developed, how details are organized, whether the writer can utilize a broad range of words, and so forth for each trait. An example would be the following:

"I like my cat. She is cute and furry. We got her last year."

As Oregon moves toward the Certificate of Initial Mastery and Certificate of Advanced Mastery system, students will want to make sure that they write a piece of sufficient length to be assessed.

Too Long

The paper exceeds the length allowed in the Administration Manual: "An extra sheet may be attached to allow a student to complete a thought—no more than finishing the sentence or paragraph begun on the final page of the writing folder." This code is not used if the student was tested under modified conditions (i.e., code 3 or 5 is marked on the writing folder).

Illegible

Obviously, papers that have been written in handwriting that cannot be decoded cannot be scored. If a paper is returned with this code (IL), it means that several raters have tried to read it but cannot. Papers are never returned unscored because they are messy or extremely difficult to read, only when they are impossible to read.

Non-English

Papers are returned unscored when they have been written either entirely or for the most part in a language other than English. Sometimes it seems evident to raters that a paper has been written by a student for whom English is a second language (see section that follows on ESL students), but, so long as the paper is mostly in English, it is scored using the scoring guide. (In 1996, papers written in Spanish were photocopied and sent to a group of teachers who later scored the papers using a Scoring Guide that has been adapted to Spanish. It is anticipated that writing in Spanish will continue to be scored at a separate scoring facility. Additional languages may be added as resources allow.)

Profane or Violent

Papers that contain profanity and/or extreme graphic violence are also returned unscored. Raters and Scoring Directors use their judgment here. A certain level of language and violence is entirely appropriate in certain contexts, but just as most schools and classrooms have limitations on these aspects of expression, so does the Oregon Writing Assessment. Writers in the real world must be aware of their audiences, and so must students as writers; some modes of expression are simply inappropriate in certain settings, and the Assessment follows the same general guidelines as most classrooms.

Miscellaneous

If a paper falls into one of the following other categories, it is not scored:

- poetry or plays (the scoring guide is designed to assess only prose; students could include poetry or plays in their Collections of Work Samples if they wanted to showcase those forms of writing);
- plagiarism;
- some other reason approved by the Scoring Director of the site.

Special Needs Students

Federal regulations stipulate that individuals with handicaps and those with limited English proficiency be given equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from any program or activity customarily granted to all students.

Therefore, all students in these categories are considered eligible for inclusion in the Oregon Statewide Assessment Program unless they are individually exempted based on the characteristics of their instructional programs (in the case of handicapped students), or on the basis of documented evidence of their limited proficiency in English. Each student must be considered individually in making such exemptions.

The Department of Education publishes specific factors and criteria to be considered in making these individual decisions in the manuals for administering the statewide assessments.

- **Scoring the writing of English as a Second Language (ESL) Students and Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP's)**

Once it is determined that individual ESL and IEP students should participate in the writing assessment (and most do), some parents and educators question the value of applying the scoring guide to their writing in the same way in which it is applied to other Oregon students. If students have developed strong skills in English, of course there is no problem, but when students are still struggling, their teachers are anxious to recognize them for the progress they are making, even though they may not yet have achieved the desired standards in writing.

In Oregon's Standards Model, students have many opportunities to demonstrate what they can do and the progress they have made. The best place to demonstrate progress is in the Collection of Work Samples, in which students can put work done over time that does, in fact, highlight the changes in their skills.

The function of the Statewide Writing Assessment, however, is to give students straight, honest feedback about their writing skills in standard written English based on the scoring guide, which should be applied in the same way to all student work submitted. This information should be valuable to all students and their parents and teachers. Teachers should help students and their families interpret the results and put them into a healthy, constructive perspective, acknowledging good effort and commitment when they have occurred.

WRITE

Official Scoring Guide

Ideas/Content

6	5	4
The writing is exceptionally clear, focused, and interesting. It holds the reader's attention throughout. Main ideas stand out and are developed by strong support and rich details suitable to audience and purpose. The writing is characterized by • clarity, focus, and control. • main idea(s) that stand out. • supporting, relevant, carefully selected details; when appropriate, use of resources provides strong, accurate, credible support. • a thorough, balanced, in-depth explanation / exploration of the topic; the writing makes connections and shares insights. • content and selected details that are well-suited to audience and purpose.	**The writing is clear, focused and interesting. It holds the reader's attention. Main ideas stand out and are developed by supporting details suitable to audience and purpose. The writing is characterized by** • clarity, focus, and control. • main idea(s) that stand out. • supporting, relevant, carefully selected details; when appropriate, use of resources provides strong, accurate, credible support. • a thorough, balanced explanation / exploration of the topic; the writing makes connections and shares insights. • content and selected details that are well-suited to audience and purpose.	**The writing is clear and focused. The reader can easily understand the main ideas. Support is present, although it may be limited or rather general. The writing is characterized by** • an easily identifiable purpose. • clear main idea(s). • supporting details that are relevant, but may be overly general or limited in places; when appropriate, resources are used to provide accurate support. • a topic that is explored / explained, although developmental details may occasionally be out of balance with the main idea(s); some connections and insights may be present. • content and selected details that are relevant, but perhaps not consistently well-chosen for audience and purpose.
3	**2**	**1**
The reader can understand the main ideas, although they may be overly broad or simplistic, and the results may not be effective. Supporting detail is often limited, insubstantial, overly general, or occasionally slightly off-topic. The writing is characterized by • an easily identifiable purpose and main idea(s). • predictable or overly-obvious main ideas or plot; conclusions or main points seem to echo observations heard elsewhere. • support that is attempted, but developmental details that are often limited in scope, uneven, somewhat off-topic, predictable, or overly general. • details that may not be well-grounded in credible resources; they may be based on clichés, stereotypes or questionable sources of information. • difficulties when moving from general observations to specifics.	**Main ideas and purpose are somewhat unclear or development is attempted but minimal. The writing is characterized by** • a purpose and main idea(s) that may require extensive inferences by the reader. • minimal development; insufficient details. • irrelevant details that clutter the text. • extensive repetition of detail.	**The writing lacks a central idea or purpose. The writing is characterized by** • ideas that are extremely limited or simply unclear. • attempts at development that are minimal or non-existent; the paper is too short to demonstrate the development of an idea.

Appendix A

74

Organization

6 **The organization enhances the central idea(s) and its development. The order and structure are compelling and move the reader through the text easily. The writing is characterized by** • effective, perhaps creative, sequencing; the organizational structure fits the topic, and the writing is easy to follow • a strong, inviting beginning that draws the reader in and a strong, satisfying sense of resolution or closure • smooth, effective transitions among all elements (sentences, paragraphs, ideas) • details that fit where placed	**5** **The organization enhances the central idea(s) and its development. The order and structure are strong and move the reader through the text. The writing is characterized by** • effective sequencing; the organizational structure fits the topic, and the writing is easy to follow • an inviting beginning that draws the reader in and a satisfying sense of resolution or closure • smooth, effective transitions among all elements (sentences, paragraphs, ideas) • details that fit where placed	**4** **Organization is clear and coherent. Order and structure are present, but may seem formulaic. The writing is characterized by** • clear sequencing • an organization that may be predictable • a recognizable, developed beginning that may not be particularly inviting; a developed conclusion that may lack subtlety • a body that is easy to follow with details that fit where placed • transitions that may be stilted or formulaic • organization which helps the reader, despite some weaknesses
3 **An attempt has been made to organize the writing; however, the overall structure is inconsistent or skeletal. The writing is characterized by** • attempts at sequencing, but the order or the relationship among ideas may occasionally be unclear • a beginning and an ending which, although present, are either undeveloped or too obvious (e.g., "My topic is ..."; "These are all the reasons that ...") • transitions that sometimes work. The same few transitional devices (e.g., coordinating conjunctions, numbering, etc.) may be overused • a structure that is skeletal or too rigid • placement of details that may not always be effective • organization which lapses in some places, but helps the reader in others	**2** **The writing lacks a clear organizational structure. An occasional organizational device is discernible; however, the writing is either difficult to follow and the reader has to reread substantial portions, or the piece is simply too short to demonstrate organizational skills. The writing is characterized by** • some attempts at sequencing, but the order or the relationship among ideas is frequently unclear • a missing or extremely undeveloped beginning, body, and/or ending • a lack of transitions, or when present, ineffective or overused • a lack of an effective organizational structure • details that seem to be randomly placed, leaving the reader frequently confused	**1** **The writing lacks coherence; organization seems haphazard and disjointed. Even after rereading, the reader remains confused. The writing is characterized by** • a lack of effective sequencing • a failure to provide an identifiable beginning, body and/or ending • a lack of transitions • pacing that is consistently awkward; the reader feels either mired down in trivia or rushed along too rapidly • a lack of organization which ultimately obscures or distorts the main point

77

7

Voice

6 **The writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. The writer seems deeply committed to the topic, and there is an exceptional sense of "writing to be read." The writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. The writing is characterized by** • an effective level of closeness to or distance from the audience (e.g., a narrative should have a strong personal voice, while an expository piece may require extensive use of outside resources and a more academic voice; nevertheless, both should be engaging, lively, or interesting. Technical writing may require greater distance.) • a exceptionally strong sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader and of how to communicate the message most effectively. The reader may discern the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction. • a sense that the topic has come to life; when appropriate, the writing may show originality, liveliness, honesty, conviction, excitement, humor, or suspense.	**5** **The writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. The writer seems committed to the topic, and there is a sense of "writing to be read." The writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. The writing is characterized by** • an appropriate level of closeness to or distance from the audience (e.g., a narrative should have a strong personal voice, while an expository piece may require extensive use of outside resources and a more academic voice; nevertheless, both should be engaging, lively, or interesting. Technical writing may require greater distance.) • a strong sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader and of how to communicate the message most effectively. The reader may discern the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction. • a sense that the topic has come to life; when appropriate, the writing may show originality, liveliness, honesty, conviction, excitement, humor, or suspense.	**4** **A voice is present. The writer demonstrates commitment to the topic, and there may be a sense of "writing to be read." In places, the writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. The writing is characterized by** • a questionable or inconsistent level of closeness to or distance from the audience. • a sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader but has not consistently employed an appropriate voice. The reader may glimpse the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction in places. • liveliness, sincerity, or humor when appropriate; however, at times the writing may be either inappropriately casual or personal, or inappropriately formal and stiff.
3 **The writer's commitment to the topic seems inconsistent. A sense of the writer may emerge at times; however, the voice is either inappropriately personal or an inappropriately impersonal. The writing is characterized by** • a limited sense of audience; the writer's awareness of the reader is unclear. • an occasional sense of the writer behind the words; however, the voice may shift or disappear a line or two later and the writing become somewhat mechanical. • a limited ability to shift to a more objective voice when necessary.	**2** **The writing provides little sense of involvement or commitment. There is no evidence that the writer has chosen a suitable voice. The writing is characterized by** • little engagement of the writer; the writing tends to be largely flat, lifeless, stiff, or mechanical. • a voice that is likely to be overly informal and personal. • a lack of audience awareness; there is little sense of "writing to be read." • little or no hint of the writer behind the words. There is rarely a sense of interaction between reader and writer.	**1** **The writing seems to lack a sense of involvement or commitment. The writing is characterized by** • no engagement of the writer; the writing is flat and lifeless. • a lack of audience awareness; there is no sense of "writing to be read." • no hint of the writer behind the words. There is no sense of interaction between writer and reader; the writing does not involve or engage the reader.

Word Choice

6 **Words convey the intended message in an exceptionally interesting, precise, and natural way appropriate to audience and purpose. The writer employs a rich, broad range of words which have been carefully chosen and thoughtfully placed for impact. The writing is characterized by** • accurate, strong, specific words; powerful words energize the writing • fresh, original expression; slang, if used, seems purposeful and is effective • vocabulary that is striking and varied, but that is natural and not overdone • ordinary words used in an unusual way • words that evoke strong images; figurative language may be used	**5** **Words convey the intended message in an interesting, precise, and natural way appropriate to audience and purpose. The writer employs a broad range of words which have been carefully chosen and thoughtfully placed for impact. The writing is characterized by** • accurate, specific words; word choices energize the writing • fresh, vivid expression; slang, if used, seems purposeful and is effective • vocabulary that may be striking and varied, but that is natural and not overdone • ordinary words used in an unusual way • words that evoke clear images; figurative language may be used	**4** **Words effectively convey the intended message. The writer employs a variety of words that are functional and appropriate to audience and purpose. The writing is characterized by** • words that work but do not particularly energize the writing • expression that is functional; however, slang, if used, does not seem purposeful and is not particularly effective • attempts at colorful language that may occasionally seem overdone • occasional overuse of technical language or jargon • rare experiments with language; however, the writing may have some fine moments and generally avoids cliches
3 **Language is quite ordinary, lacking interest, precision and variety, or may be inappropriate to audience and purpose in places. The writer does not employ a variety of words, producing a sort of "generic" paper filled with familiar words and phrases. The writing is characterized by** • words that work, but that rarely capture the reader's interest • expression that seems mundane and general; slang, if used, does not seem purposeful and is not effective • attempts at colorful language that seem overdone or forced • words that are accurate for the most part, although misused words may occasionally appear; technical language or jargon may be overused or inappropriately used • reliance on cliches and overused expressions	**2** **Language is monotonous and/or misused, detracting from the meaning and impact. The writing is characterized by** • words that are colorless, flat or imprecise • monotonous repetition or overwhelming reliance on worn expressions that repeatedly detract from the message • images that are fuzzy or absent altogether	**1** **The writing shows an extremely limited vocabulary or is so filled with misuses of words that the meaning is obscured. Only the most general kind of message is communicated because of vague or imprecise language. The writing is characterized by** • general, vague words that fail to communicate • an extremely limited range of words • words that simply do not fit the text; they seem imprecise, inadequate, or just plain wrong

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Sentence Fluency

6 **The writing has an effective flow and rhythm. Sentences show a high degree of craftsmanship, with consistently strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable. The writing is characterized by** • a natural, fluent sound; it glides along with one sentence flowing effortlessly into the next • extensive variation in sentence structure, length, and beginnings that add interest to the text • sentence structure that enhances meaning by drawing attention to key ideas or reinforcing relationships among ideas • varied sentence patterns that create an effective combination of power and grace • strong control over sentence structure; fragments, if used at all, work well • stylistic control; dialogue, if used, sounds natural	**5** **The writing has an easy flow and rhythm. Sentences are carefully crafted, with strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable. The writing is characterized by** • a natural, fluent sound; it glides along with one sentence flowing into the next • variation in sentence structure, length, and beginnings that add interest to the text • sentence structure that enhances meaning • control over sentence structure; fragments, if used at all, work well • stylistic control; dialogue, if used, sounds natural	**4** **The writing flows; however, connections between phrases or sentences may be less than fluid. Sentence patterns are somewhat varied, contributing to ease in oral reading. The writing is characterized by** • a natural sound; the reader can move easily through the piece, although it may lack a certain rhythm and grace • some repeated patterns of sentence structure, length, and beginnings that may detract somewhat from overall impact • strong control over simple sentence structures, but variable control over more complex sentences; fragments, if present, are usually effective • occasional lapses in stylistic control; dialogue, if used, sounds natural for the most part, but may at times sound stilted or unnatural
3 **The writing tends to be mechanical rather than fluid. Occasional awkward constructions may force the reader to slow down or reread. The writing is characterized by** • some passages that invite fluid oral reading; however, others do not • some variety in sentence structure, length, and beginnings, although the writer falls into repetitive sentence patterns • good control over simple sentence structures, but little control over more complex sentences; fragments, if present, may not be effective • sentences which, although functional, lack energy • lapses in stylistic control; dialogue, if used, may sound stilted or unnatural	**2** **The writing tends to be either choppy or rambling. Awkward constructions often force the reader to slow down or reread. The writing is characterized by** • significant portions of the text that are difficult to follow or read aloud • sentence patterns that are monotonous (e.g., subject-verb or subject-verb-object) • a significant number of awkward, choppy, or rambling constructions	**1** **The writing is difficult to follow or to read aloud. Sentences tend to be incomplete, rambling, or very awkward. The writing is characterized by** • text that does not invite--and may not even permit--smooth oral reading • confusing word order that is often jarring and irregular • sentence structure that frequently obscures meaning • sentences that are disjointed, confusing, or rambling

Conventions

6

The writing demonstrates exceptionally strong control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage) and uses them effectively to enhance communication. Errors are so few and so minor that the reader can easily skim right over them unless specifically searching for them. The writing is characterized by

- strong control of conventions; manipulation of conventions may occur for stylistic effect
- strong, effective use of punctuation that guides the reader through the text
- correct spelling, even of more difficult words
- paragraph breaks that reinforce the organizational structure
- correct grammar and usage that contribute to clarity and style
- skill in using a wide range of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece
- little or no need for editing

5

The writing demonstrates strong control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage) and uses them effectively to enhance communication. Errors are so few and so minor that they do not impede readability. The writing is characterized by

- strong control of conventions
- effective use of punctuation that guides the reader through the text
- correct spelling, even of more difficult words
- paragraph breaks that reinforce the organizational structure
- correct capitalization; errors, if any, are minor
- correct grammar and usage that contribute to clarity and style
- skill in using a wide range of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece
- little need for editing

4

The writing demonstrates control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage). Minor errors, while perhaps noticeable, do not impede readability. The writing is characterized by

- control over conventions used, although a wide range is not demonstrated
- correct end-of-sentence punctuation; internal punctuation may sometimes be incorrect
- spelling that is usually correct, especially on common words
- basically sound paragraph breaks that reinforce the organizational structure
- correct capitalization; errors, if any, are minor
- occasional lapses in correct grammar and usage; problems are not severe enough to distort meaning or confuse the reader
- moderate need for editing

3

The writing demonstrates limited control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage). Errors begin to impede readability. The writing is characterized by

- some control over basic conventions; the text may be too simple to reveal mastery
- end-of-sentence punctuation that is usually correct; however, internal punctuation contains frequent errors
- spelling errors that distract the reader; misspelling of common words occurs
- paragraphs that sometimes run together or begin at ineffective places
- capitalization errors
- errors in grammar and usage that do not block meaning but do distract the reader
- significant need for editing

2

The writing demonstrates little control of standard writing conventions. Frequent, significant errors impede readability. The writing is characterized by

- little control over basic conventions
- many end-of-sentence punctuation errors; internal punctuation contains frequent errors
- spelling errors that frequently distract the reader; misspelling of common words often occurs
- paragraphs that often run together or begin in ineffective places
- capitalization that is inconsistent or often incorrect
- errors in grammar and usage that interfere with readability and meaning
- substantial need for editing

1

Numerous errors in usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. In fact, the severity and frequency of errors are so overwhelming that the reader finds it difficult to focus on the message and must reread for meaning. The writing is characterized by

- very limited skill in using conventions
- basic punctuation (including end-of-sentence punctuation) that tends to be omitted, haphazard, or incorrect
- frequent spelling errors that significantly impair readability
- paragraph breaks that may be highly irregular or so frequent (every sentence) that they bear no relation to the organization of the text
- capitalization that appears to be random
- a need for extensive editing

Citing Sources

Use only on classroom assignments requiring research

6

The writing demonstrates exceptionally strong commitment to the quality and significance of research and the accuracy of the written document. Documentation is used to avoid plagiarism and to enable the reader to judge how believeable or important a piece of information is by checking the source. The writer has

- acknowledged borrowed material by introducing the quotation or paraphrase with the name of the authority
- punctuated all quoted materials, errors, if any, are minor
- paraphrased material by rewriting it using writer's style and language
- provided specific in-text documentation for each borrowed item
- provided a bibliography page listing every source cited in the paper, omitted sources that were consulted but not used

5

The writing demonstrates a strong commitment to the quality and significance of research and the accuracy of the written document. Documentation is used to avoid plagiarism and to enable the reader to judge how believable or important a piece of information is by checking the source. Errors are so few and so minor that the reader can easily skim right over them unless specifically searching for them. The writer has

- acknowledged borrowed material by introducing the quotation or paraphrase with the name of the authority, key phrases are directly quoted so as to give full credit where credit is due
- punctuated all quoted materials; errors are minor
- paraphrased material by rewriting using writer's style and language
- provided specific in-text documentation for borrowed material
- provided a bibliography page listing every source cited in the paper; omitted sources that were consulted but not used

4

The writing demonstrates a commitment to the quality and significance of research and the accuracy of the written document. Documentation is used to avoid plagiarism and to enable the reader to judge how believable or important a piece of information is by checking the source. Minor errors, while perhaps noticeable, do not blatantly violate the rules of documentation. The writer has

- acknowledged borrowed material by sometimes introducing the quotation or paraphrase with the name of the authority
- punctuated all quoted materials; errors, while noticeable, do not impede understanding
- paraphrased material by rewriting using writer's style and language
- provided in-text documentation for most borrowed material
- provided a bibliography page listing every source cited in the paper; included sources that were consulted but not used

3

The writing demonstrates a limited commitment to the quality and significance of research and the accuracy of the written document. Documentation is sometimes used to avoid plagiarism and to enable the reader to judge how believeable or important a piece of information is by checking the source. Errors begin to violate the rules of documentation. The writer has

- enclosed quoted materials within quotation marks; however, incorrectly used commas, colons, semicolons, question marks or exclamation marks that are part of the quoted material
- included paraphrased material that is not properly documented
- paraphrased material by simply rearranging sentence patterns

2

The writing demonstrates little commitment to the quality and significance of research and the accuracy of the written document. Frequent errors in documentation result in instances of plagiarism and often do not enable the reader to check the source. The writer has

- enclosed quoted materials within quotation marks; however, incorrectly used commas, colons, semicolons, question marks or exclamation marks that are part of the quoted material
- attempted paraphrasing but included words that should be enclosed by quotation marks or rephrased into the writer's language and style
- altered the essential ideas of the source
- included citations that incorrectly identify reference sources

1

The writing demonstrates disregard for the conventions of research writing. Lack of proper documentation result in plagiarism and do not enable the reader to check the source. The writer has

- borrowed abundantly from an original source, even to the point of retaining the essential wording
- no citations that credit source material
- included words or ideas from a source without providing quotation marks
- no bibliography page listing sources that were used

Appendix B

WRITE

MODE SCORING GUIDE: DESCRIPTIVE

Definition: Descriptive writing presents an object, feelings, a place, or a person in a way that creates a vivid impression in the reader's mind, enabling the reader to readily picture what the writer is talking about, to gain a rich, comprehensive and detailed sense of what is being described, and to feel that he or she is very much part of the writer's experience.

High: The paper creates a strong and vivid image or impression in the reader's mind through numerous, well-chosen details. The writer seems to notice what others might overlook.

- The writing sparkles with specific, elaborate, colorful details. It is easy to picture or feel what the writer is talking about.
- Details are carefully, selectively chosen to create a consistent and clear mood, image, or impression, and are so sharp and clear they seem to lock themselves within the reader's memory.
- As appropriate, the writer includes details that appeal to various senses: sight, taste, smell, touch, hearing.

Mid-range: The paper includes sufficient descriptive detail to enable the reader to understand the writer's feelings or to picture the object, person, or place in a general way. Yet the reader may still have a strong sense that something is missing--that important details have been overlooked. The overall picture or impression is clear only in a broad general sense.

- Some details lack specificity (e.g., "The house was big and nice"), so that the reader has a general, but not vivid, picture of what the writer is talking about.
- Some details seem random, included by chance, rather than selectively chosen to create a particular impression or image. The writer sometimes neglects to weed out what seems trivial and unnecessary, or else leaves the reader with unanswered questions or conflicting impressions.
- An abundance of modifiers (adjectives everywhere) may sometimes bog the reader down in descriptive overload.
- Opportunities to enrich the description by appealing to several senses may be overlooked.

Low: The paper does not include sufficient descriptive detail to enable the reader to get inside the writer's mind or to picture the object, person, or place with any clarity. the overall picture or impression is very sketchy, fuzzy, or incomplete.

- Details are overwhelmingly general (e.g., "He was a fun person"; "It was neat and stuff"). No clear images or impressions are created.
- Lack of specific detail leaves the reader with numerous unanswered questions; it is very hard to get a mental grip on what the writer is describing.
- The writer does not seem to appeal directly to the reader's senses. Instead, it is left to the reader's imagination (or memory based on a similar experience) to conjure up the details that would flesh out the general impression or picture.

WRITE
MODE SCORING GUIDE: NARRATIVE

Definition: Narrative writing recounts a personal experience based on something which really happened or might really have happened. All details work together in an integrated way to create a complete story with a beginning (opening or lead), middle (build-up or turning point), and end (resolution).

High: The paper has a clear, complete, and strong storyline (e.g., presentation and resolution of a problem) that is easy to recognize, follow, and paraphrase.

- The writing seems complete. The writer sets the story up and finishes it. The result is a piece of writing that stands alone as a whole story.
- The writer sets the story up with a real lead, builds to the heart of the story with satisfying momentum, then closes with a real ending that provides a sense of resolution.
- The narrative structure may not be totally chronological, but it fits the narrative mode well. There is a clear, easy-to-follow sequence of events with a definite sense of movement, i.e., something happens.
- All details and events within the story work together to produce a unified, coherent piece of writing. The balance of detail is just right (e.g., not too skimpy--no information overload).
- The story has a controlling idea, central impression, sense of change, or something learned or gained by the writer. There is a reason for the telling.

Mid-range: The paper has an identifiable--not particularly strong--storyline. It may read more like a casual recollection of more-or-less related events than a well-crafted story.

- Most of the elements needed to form a complete story are present, but the writer has not yet orchestrated things in a way that creates a stand-alone piece.
- One or more of the following is likely to be true: The writer takes a little long getting in or provides no real lead at all, fails to recognize or accentuate the high point, or provides no real ending to the story.
- The sequence of events may sometimes be interrupted or unclear; it takes some smoothing out or filling in to paraphrase this story.
- The story as a whole may be either encumbered with excess baggage, or else a little lean on critical detail.
- Though a story seems buried within the text, it may be hard to infer the significance of the events or the writer's reason for telling the tale.

Low: The paper lacks a main storyline. It may be bits and pieces of several stories, an "all about" paper that tells no story, or an unelaborated list of events that the writer has not yet pulled together to create a meaningful story.

- Not all elements needed to create a complete, unified story are present; the writer could not assemble a story from what is now at hand.
- The writer does not seem to set up a situation, build to any main or high point, or provide an ending or sense of resolution; in short, there is no story.
- Details either do not go together in any unified way, or else they lack movement; i.e., nothing happens or changes.
- The organizational structure is not chronological and does not seem suited to the narrative mode. There is no clear sequence of events.
- An attempt to paraphrase what the writer has said does not produce a story.

WRITE
MODE SCORING GUIDE: IMAGINATIVE

Definition: In imaginative writing, the writer presents a story or other information in an inventive and highly individual manner. The purpose is to entertain the reader--and sometimes the writer, as well. The writer may create a scene, situation, or character, or use his/her creativity to present ideas in a fresh and novel way. Imaginative writing may contain elements of the whimsical or fantastic--but that's not a precondition. It can also be grounded in reality--but a reality that's created through the writer's own special vision and perspective.

High: The writing is individual, fresh, and vital. It takes an unusual, unpredictable (sometimes off-beat) approach to the topic, surprising and delighting the reader with unanticipated ideas or a new way of looking at things.

- Ideas tend consistently toward the original, the inventive, the unexpected (NOT necessarily bizarre, surreal or outlandish, however).
- The writer's perspective or point of view is highly individual--and often insightful. He/she defines or develops the topic in a refreshingly personal way, making connections no one else has made.
- The writer leads the reader into new territory, where details, twists, and turns cannot readily be anticipated. The reader has the sense of being pulled inside the writer's vision, "suspending disbelief" for a time.
- The writing consistently goes beyond the obvious, enlivening the topic, and challenging the reader to think.
- While ideas often seem spontaneous, they reflect a complexity that suggests the reader has thought the topic through, considered implications, and sought a way of exploring the topic that is his/hers alone.

Mid-range: Every now and then, the writing shows sparks of the unexpected or inventive (e.g., an image or plot twist that works remarkably well), but it also lapses into predictability (clichéd plots, stereotyped characters), echoing the writing of others.

- Moments of the original or unusual dot the writing; but they are interspersed with more ordinary passages in which the writer's imagination seems "at rest."
- The writer's perspective or point of view seems to be still evolving; it reflects some good powers of observation, but is not yet striking in its individuality or insight..
- The reader may feel entertained or intrigued by some passages, yet the writer covers enough old ground that it is hard to let go of one's own reality and "buy into" the text.
- Ideas are clear enough, but they are just beginning to show a hint of the complexity, depth, or vitality that comes when a writer stretches the bounds of his/her imagination.

Low: The writer seems detached and willing to settle for what is routine, ordinary, or mundane; there is no real mental stretch for writer or reader, no real sense of joy or adventure in the writing.

- The reader is hard-pressed to cite moments that sparkle with originality--moments that belong to this writer alone.
- The writer does not seem captivated by the topic, and/or has not yet thought of a way to enliven or personalize the topic.
- The writer does not put enough of him- or herself in the writing to reveal anything of his/her own perspective or vision of the world.
- As yet the writing lacks the complexity or depth to challenge a reader's thinking or lift the topic out of the realm of the obvious and predictable.

WRITE
MODE SCORING GUIDE: EXPOSITORY

Definition: Expository writing gives information, explains something, clarifies, or defines. The writing teaches, reveals, informs, or amplifies the reader's understanding through a carefully crafted mix of key points and critical support.

High: The paper consistently presents information in a way that expands the reader's knowledge or enhances the reader's understanding. The result is clear, comprehensible, and complete.

- Ideas are unambiguous and fully explained.
- The paper makes a point that the reader can readily grasp.
- Facts, examples, or explanations provide strong support.
- The reader has a sense of learning something or understanding an issue/topic better.
- The writer seems to be working from a strong base of information, and can select what will help the reader most.
- The writer shows a concern for the reader, and consistently presents information in a way that contributes to the reader's understanding.

Mid-range: The paper presents some important information, but the reader feels about halfway home in terms of understanding the point the writer is trying to make. The result is a mix of helpful information, together with some fuzzy or incomplete points.

- Ideas are reasonably clear, but the reader needs to make some inferences.
- The writer makes a general point, or points, but hasn't narrowed or fine-tuned the topic quite enough yet.
- Facts, examples, or explanations provide marginally adequate (but not strong) support.
- Some parts of the paper seem repetitive or predictable.
- The writer seems to have just enough information to write about this topic, but not enough to anticipate and address all the reader's questions.
- The writer seems aware of the reader, but often tends to explain what's already obvious, or to make assumptions about the reader's knowledge that aren't warranted.
- The writer attempts to explain or inform, but the power of the paper to enhance the reader's understanding is somewhat limited.

Low: The paper is very limited in its capacity to inform or enlighten the reader. The writing is very unclear, incomplete, or both.

- Ideas are extremely limited or hard to understand, even if the reader tries to draw inferences based on what is there.
- The paper cannot seem to get beyond lists or generalizations; it is more puzzling or confusing than enlightening.
- The writer does not seem to have enough information to write about this topic. Support is very weak or nonexistent.
- The reader has a difficult time gleaning any knowledge, insight, or understanding from the text.

WRITE
MODE SCORING GUIDE: PERSUASIVE

Definition: Persuasive writing attempts to convince the reader that a point of view is valid, or to persuade the reader to take specific action. It is based on a topic that is limited in scope (and therefore manageable), and that is debatable--a topic about which there could be more than one point of view. Persuasive differs from expository writing in that it does more than explain or enlighten; it also takes a stand, and endeavors to persuade the reader to take that same stand.

High: The central issue is clearly stated, and elaborated as necessary to indicate in-depth understanding on the part of the writer. The writer's position is very clear, and the primary argument or proposed plan is presented in an effective and compelling way.

- The writer takes a definite stand and sticks with it; he/she may show sensitivity to other viewpoints, but does not waffle or shift sides part way through the argument.
- The writer indicates a thorough understanding of the issues involved and narrows or focuses the topic in a way that helps the reader zero in on key issues, too.
- Support is extensive and convincing. The writer generally offers more than a single reason for his/her position, and does not rely strictly on opinion or emotional pleas.
- If it is important to consider (and refute) possible counter arguments, the writer does so, but in a way that makes the presentation enlightening, not confusing.
- There is enough information to guide the reader in making a sound decision on this issue.
- The reader feels convinced/persuaded OR (at least) develops a real appreciation and respect for the writer's position.

Mid-range: The central issue is stated clearly, but without sufficient elaboration to indicate any in-depth understanding. Although it is fairly clear which side the writer is on, the main arguments may not be well-developed or presented in a compelling way.

- The more obvious, well-worn arguments are usually in place (e.g., there may be enough there to persuade those who already agree); but the writer rarely digs for the solid, sound evidence that could really enable a skeptical reader to see things in a new light.
- Support is fairly credible, but tends to be general, limited, or predictable.
- Some arguments may seem tentative or a bit lame.
- The writer may rely too much on just one argument, or may rely almost as much on opinion and emotion as on strong evidence or the wisdom of experience.
- The writer has given enough thought to the topic to take a position and defend it with some feeling, but has not yet assembled enough critical evidence, reasons, or logical arguments to guide others in making a good decision on this issue.

Low: It may be hard to infer the central issue without knowing the prompt or question asked. The writer either does not take a clear stand (e.g., just makes general, noncommittal comments), or else simply expresses an unsupported, unelaborated opinion.

- The writer may begin with one position, then totally and arbitrarily change course, as if just now realizing his/her true feelings.
- The writer's understanding of key issues seems as yet limited; there is little or no information that would really help a reader think through the question(s) at hand.

WRITE
MODE SCORING GUIDE: PERSUASIVE

Low: cont'd

- The writer who takes a stand tends to rely far more on emotional pleas (e.g., "Everyone hates school uniforms...") than on well-thought-out reasons that would convince the reader.
- Arguments are very weak, hard to follow, or limited strictly to the writer's opinion (e.g., "Year-round school is a dumb idea").
- The reader feels either unconvinced or unsure what position the writer wishes him/her to take.

Appendix C

Sample Prompts, 1993-1997

Grades 3 and 5

Descriptive:

DESCRIBE a person or an animal you will never forget.

A newspaper is having a contest among elementary students to see who can write the most effective description of a favorite meal or an interesting meal. Write an entry for the contest in which you DESCRIBE one of your favorite meals or one that was unusual or interesting. DESCRIBE it so clearly that the judges know exactly what it is like.

DESCRIBE a pet you own or would like to own. Tell how it looks, acts and feels when you touch it.

Most people have at least one thing that means a lot to them. Think of something you have that you would like to keep forever. DESCRIBE it so clearly that your readers can picture it in their minds.

Imaginative:

Pretend you are not a person. You are something else. You can be anything your mind can think up. MAKE UP A STORY about ONE thing that happens to you.

You have read stories that explain why something in nature is the way it is – such as "why a camel has a hump." MAKE UP YOUR OWN STORY to tell why something is the way it is.

Imagine that you are alone on a beach at night. Suddenly, you see lights far out on the ocean. MAKE UP A STORY about what happens to you.

Imagine you have done something that has been written up in a book called The Guinness Book of World Records. MAKE UP A STORY about the unusual thing you did.

Imagine that you can travel in time to any place or time that you wish. Pick one time and place and MAKE UP AN IMAGINATIVE STORY about what happens there.

Narrative:

Think of a time when something surprised you. Maybe it was a big surprise or a small surprise no one else noticed. TELL WHAT HAPPENED.

TELL ABOUT a physical activity in which you have participated (for example: recess, games, dance, individual or team sports, skateboarding, bicycling or swimming).

Think about something that happened while you were in school that you will remember even when you are grown up. TELL WHAT HAPPENED so that someone else can understand what it was like to be there.

TELL A TRUE STORY about an experience that you have had with an animal.

Expository:

A rainy day doesn't have to be bad. Some people like rainy days. Think about some of the things you can do on a rainy day. EXPLAIN how to turn a rainy day into a good day.

Think of one thing you know how to make. EXPLAIN very clearly how you make it.

Both children and adults have favorite "toys." EXPLAIN what makes a favorite "toy" of yours special to you. It could be a toy that you had when you were younger or one you still enjoy, or even someone else's toy.

EXPLAIN how you celebrate a favorite holiday, event or custom. Be sure to use details so that your reader can picture what your favorite time is like.

EXPLAIN how to play your favorite game or do your favorite activity. Be sure to write a paper, not just a list.

Nominate someone for some kind of award. EXPLAIN why that person deserves that particular award.

Persuasive:

Think of one thing at your school that you would like to change. Write an article that would CONVINCE other students and teachers in your school to want the same change.

A special Young Reader's Choice book award is going to be given to a book that is popular with students in grades 5-7. Write a paper to CONVINCE the judges to choose the book you think is the best one. The judges want you to write about the reasons that this is a good book not just retell the story.

Think of a pet that would be good to have in your classroom at school. CONVINCE your teacher that your class should get this pet.

Some third graders think they are old enough to decide how late they can stay up at night. What do YOU think? Write a paper that clearly tells when you think kids are old enough to set their own bedtimes. Give reasons that will CONVINCE your readers to agree with you.

Pretend a friend of yours has decided to eat ONLY junk food. Write a paper that would CONVINCE your friend to eat a healthy diet.

Write a paper in which you TRY TO CHANGE SOMEONE'S MIND about something.

Appendix D

GUIDE TO REVISION
Grade 3

1. Did I explain my ideas clearly?
2. Does my paper have a good beginning, a main point, and a good ending?
3. Does my paper sound like me?
4. Did I choose words that are clear and interesting?
5. Do my sentences read smoothly?
6. Did I proofread carefully?

GUIDE TO REVISION
Grade 5

Use the checklist below to help you revise your rough draft before you copy it into your writing folder.

IDEAS AND CONTENT

☐ My paper has a clear purpose or makes a point.
☐ I choose clear details and examples to help the reader understand my message.
☐ I stick to the main idea. I leave out details that do not matter.
☐ I am writing about something I know.

ORGANIZATION

☐ My introduction would make a reader want to keep reading.
☐ I tell things in an order that makes sense.
☐ Details in my paper go together.
☐ My paper ends in a good spot. It doesn't stop suddenly or drag on too long.

VOICE

☐ My writing shows what I really think and feel.
☐ I like what I have written.
☐ My writing sounds like me, and not like someone else.
☐ I have thought about my reader. I have tried to make my writing clear to the reader.

WORD CHOICE

☐ I choose words that will make my meaning clear.
☐ My words paint a picture in the reader's mind.
☐ I have tried to find my own way to say things.
☐ Sometimes I have tried to say something in a new and different way.

SENTENCE FLUENCY

☐ My sentences make sense. They are clear.
☐ I keep my paper interesting by using different sentence lengths.
☐ Sentences begin in different ways. (They do NOT all begin with the same words.)
☐ My paper would be easy to read out loud.

CONVENTIONS

☐ My paragraphs begin in the right spots.
☐ My punctuation is correct.
☐ I use capital letters on names or people, places, or things.
☐ My spelling is correct.
☐ I have proofread my paper.

Student Writer's Report

1997 Oregon Statewide Assessment Program

NAME:
TEACHER:
SCHOOL:
DISTRICT:
CDS CODE:

ESSAY ID:
PERIOD:
GRADE:
TEST DATE:

Your Scores

	Ideas & Content	Organi-zation	Voice	Word Choice	Sentence Fluency	Conven-tions	Special Code
Reader 1							
Reader 2							

If the scores in any traits differ, that means the two readers did not totally agree on their judgment of your performance in that trait. In this case, your score is a combination of the two readers' scores. For example, 4/5 shows that your score is somewhere between a 4 and 5.

Thank you very much for sharing a sample of your writing with us. Two readers have evaluated your writing and their scores are included in this report. Your paper was scored in six categories:

IDEAS: How clear, complete and well-developed were your ideas?

ORGANIZATION: How effective was your introduction? Did you present information in an order that makes sense? Did you end your paper well?

VOICE: Did you put something of yourself into the paper? Was the writing lively? Did you write what you really thought and felt?

WORD CHOICE: Did you choose words that helped make your message both interesting and easy to understand?

SENTENCE FLUENCY: Were sentences smooth and easy to read?

CONVENTIONS: Did you proofread carefully and correct errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar? Did your paragraphs begin at the right spots?

HERE IS WHAT THE SPECIAL CODES MEAN:

Special codes appear in the last column of scores only if they apply to your paper.

BL: Blank
TS: Too short
TL: Too long - your paper significantly exceeded the space allowed
NE: Not written in English
IL: Illegible

PV: Profane or violent
MS: Miscellaneous - Your paper was not scored for a reason other than those listed at left.
OTS: Off Topic Scorable - Your paper was scored, but it was not on a topic you were given.

WHAT THE SCORES MEAN, BASED ON OREGON'S SCORING GUIDE:

↑

Score of 6:	**Exemplary.** The reader felt your writing showed complete mastery in this trait and that, as a writer, you were in exceptional control of your writing.
Score of 5:	**Strong.** The reader felt your writing showed many strengths in this trait and that, as a writer, you were perfecting control of your writing.
Score of 4:	**Proficient.** The reader felt your writing showed strengths in this trait and that, as a writer, you were in control of your writing.
Score of 3:	**Developing.** The reader felt your writing showed both strengths and weaknesses and that, as a writer, you were developing some control of your writing.
Score of 2:	**Emerging.** The reader felt your writing showed partial control, but may need more detail or polishing.
Score of 1:	**Beginning.** The reader felt your writing was in a "beginning" stage, where you had difficulty communicating your thoughts.

Appendix F

Requirements for Collection of Work Samples

State performance assessments and classroom assignments are scored using the official state scoring guide. The areas of the guide used for the standards include (1) Ideas and Content; (2) Organization; (3) Sentence Fluency; (4) Writing Conventions; and for grades 8 and 10, (5) Citing Sources.

Grade 3

Evidence	Meets	Exceeds
Two assignments showing at least two types of writing (i.e. narrative, expository, persuasive or imaginative).	Score of 3 in ideas and content, organization, writing conventions.	Score of 4 in ideas and content, organization, writing conventions.

Grade 5

Evidence	Meets	Exceeds
Three assignments showing three types of writing (i.e. narrative, expository, persuasive or imaginative). One assignment must be a report based on research.	Score of 4 in all areas	Score of 5 in all areas

Grade 8

Evidence	Meets	Exceeds
Four assignments. The assignments must demonstrate expository and persuasive writing. They also must demonstrate narrative or imaginative writing. Either an expository or a persuasive assignment must include citations.	Score of 4 in all areas	Score of 5 in all areas

Grade 10

Evidence	Meets	Exceeds
Five assignments including a business, technical or vocational paper. The assignments must demonstrate expository and persuasive writing. They also must demonstrate narrative or imaginative writing. Either an expository or a persuasive assignment must include citations.	Score of 4 in all areas	Score of 5 in all areas

Appendix G

Conversion Tables from Five to Six-Point Scoring Scale

In 1995, the Department of Education revised its scoring guide for writing assessment to describe six levels of performance, rather than the previous five levels. This change was made to reflect the levels of achievement for the Certificate of Initial Mastery. The two scales result in a lack of comparability of new scores with previous writing assessments when using "raw" scores. A conversion (equating) formula is necessary to make the two scales comparable. A study was conducted to score the same set of papers under both scoring systems and estimate the parameters for the linear equating formula that appears below.

The steps to convert 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1994 writing assessment means to the 6-point scale are as follows:

Calculate a mean score on the 6-point scale by multiplying the mean on the 5-point scale by parameter A, and adding parameter B to this product. Parameters A and B, which differ by grade and writing trait, are given in the following tables:

Grade 3 Conversion Parameters

	Ideas	Organization	Voice	Word Choice	Sentence Fluency	Conventions
Parameter A	.95	.96	.93	1.20	.99	.83
Parameter B	.50	.21	.46	-0.51	.05	.52

Grade 5 Conversion Parameters

	Ideas	Organization	Voice	Word Choice	Sentence Fluency	Conventions
Parameter A	.96	.88	.94	1.21	.95	.91
Parameter B	.56	1.12	.92	-0.12	.61	1.00

Grade 8 Conversion Parameters

	Ideas	Organization	Voice	Word Choice	Sentence Fluency	Conventions
Parameter A	1.12	1.00	.85	1.06	.89	1.02
Parameter B	.01	.12	.97	.38	.63	.06

Grade 11 Conversion Parameters

	Ideas	Organization	Voice	Word Choice	Sentence Fluency	Conventions
Parameter A	.84	.78	.79	.93	.88	.84
Parameter B	.66	1.06	1.08	.57	.57	.83

Appendix H

Inter-rater reliability: 1997

	Trait	Exact Agreement	Adjacent Agreement	Non-Agreement	Mean
Grade 3	Ideas/Content	51%	44%	4%	3.7
	Organization	51%	45%	4%	3.6
	Voice	52%	44%	4%	3.9
	Word Choice	57%	41%	2%	3.8
	Sentence Fluency	53%	44%	3%	3.7
	Conventions	55%	42%	2%	3.6
Grade 8	Ideas/Content	51%	45%	4%	3.9
	Organization	51%	45%	4%	3.9
	Voice	50%	46%	4%	4.1
	Word Choice	55%	42%	3%	4.0
	Sentence Fluency	52%	44%	4%	3.9
	Conventions	53%	44%	3%	3.7
Grade 10	Ideas/Content	51%	44%	5%	4.0
	Organization	51%	44%	5%	3.9
	Voice	51%	44%	5%	4.2
	Word Choice	57%	40%	3%	4.0
	Sentence Fluency	53%	43%	4%	4.0
	Conventions	53%	43%	4%	3.8

Appendix I

Writing Content Panel Members

1992-1993

Patty Beauchamp	Jefferson Elementary School, Corvallis
Linda Beith	David Douglas School District, Portland
Brian Borton	Astor Elementary School, Astoria
Carol Brown	Waverly Elementary School, Albany
Dennis Cass	La Grande High School, La Grande
Consuelo Curtis	Bear Creek Elementary School, Bend
Judy Drais	Talent Junior High School, Talent
Corlee Fredrick	Rainier Elementary School, Rainier
Chris Gilde	Seaside High School, Seaside
Bonnie Hill	Alsea High School, Alsea
Steve Hudson	Portland Community College, Portland
Mike Hyden	Culver Middle School, Culver
Dick Jascoski	McNary High School, Salem
Ronalie Kincaid	Springfield High School, Springfield
Nancy May	Siuslaw High School, Florence
Amy Meabe	Waluga Junior High School, Lake Oswego
Judy Severen	Athena Elementary School, Athena
Lana Stanley	Hermiston High School, Hermiston
Carolyn Watson	Portsmouth Middle School, Portland
Patti Wixon	Walker Elementary, Ashland

1993-1994

Patty Beauchamp	Jefferson Elementary, Corvallis
Linda Beith	David Douglas School District, Portland
Brian Borton	Astor Elementary School, Astoria
Carol Brown	Waverly Elementary School, Albany
Dennis Cass	La Grande High School, La Grande
Judy Drais	Talent Junior High, Talent
Corlee Fredrick	Rainier Elementary School, Rainier
Bonnie Hill	Alsea High School, Alsea
Steve Hudson	Portland Community College, Portland
Mike Hyden	Culver Middle School, Culver
Dick Jascoski	McNary High School, Salem
Ronalie Kincaid	Springfield High School, Springfield
Nancy May	Siuslaw High School, Florence
Amy Meabe	Waluga Junior High School, Lake Oswego
Judy Severen	Athena Elementary School, Athena
Lana Stanley	Hermiston High School, Hermiston
Carolyn Watson	Portsmouth Middle School, Portland

1994-1995

Patty Beauchamp	Jefferson Elementary, Corvallis
Linda Beith	David Douglas School District, Portland
Brian Borton	Astor Elementary School, Astoria
Carol Brown	Waverly Elementary School, Albany
Judy Drais	Talent Junior High, Talent
Chris Gilde	Seaside High School, Seaside

Pat Haley	Grants Pass School District, Grants Pass
Richard Havens	Gladstone High School, Gladstone
Bonnie Hill	Alsea High School, Alsea
Steve Hudson	Portland Community College, Portland
Dick Jascoski	McNary High School, Salem
Ronalie Kincaid	Springfield High School, Springfield
Amy Meabe	Waluga Junior High School, Lake Oswego
Judy Severen	Athena-Weston School District, Athena
Lana Stanley	Hermiston High School, Hermiston
Lorraine Strand	Lebanon Union High School, Lebanon

1995-1996

Patty Beauchamp	Jefferson Elementary School, Corvallis
Linda Beith	David Douglas School District, Portland
Brian Borton	Astor Elementary School , Astoria
Maria Cervantes	Nellie Muir Elementary School, Woodburn
Kathy Cowan	Blanco Middle School, Port Orford
D. Eloise Dielman	Eastern Oregon State College, La Grande
Judy Drais	Talent Middle School, Talent
Daphne Faulk	Whitman Elementary School, Portland
Sammy Fratto	Whiteaker Middle School, Salem
Bonnie Hill	Alsea High School, Alsea
Steve Hudson	Portland Community College, Portland
Teri Houghton	Hidden Valley High School, Grants Pass
Ronalie Kincaid	Springfield High School, Springfield
Cynthia MacLeod	Sabin Elementary School, Portland
Bobby Puckett	Ontario High School, Ontario
LeAnne Raze	Harrisburg Elementary School, Harrisburg
Dian Smith	Riddle High School, Riddle

1996-1997

Patty Beauchamp	Jefferson Elementary, Corvallis
Linda Beith	David Douglas School District, Portland
Brian Borton	Astor Elementary School, Astoria
Kathy Cowan	Blanco Junior High School, Port Orford
Daphne Faulk	Whitman Elementary School, Portland
Sharon Faulkner	Lakeview High School, Lakeview
Sammy Fratto	Whiteaker Middle School, Salem
Bonnie Hill	Alsea High School, Alsea
Jocelyn Hoffman	Terra Linda Elementary, Beaverton
Stephen Hudson	Portland Community College, Portland
Dick Jaskoski	McNary High School, Salem
Ronalie Kincaid	Springfield High School, Springfield
Bobby Puckett	Ontario High School, Ontario
LeAnne Raze	Harrisburg Elementary, Harrisburg
William Shotton	Lava Ridge Elementary, Bend
Dian Smith	Riddle High School, Riddle
Marlene Soderquist	Kinnaman Elementary, Beaverton
Sue Walsh	Schirle Elementary, Salem
Susan Zottola	Riverside Elementary, Grants Pass

Additional assistance and consultation provided by Sue Blanchard, Independent Consultant; Don Blanchard, Independent Consultant; and Evelyn Brzezinski, Interwest Applied Research

Appendix J

Bibliography: Writing Assessment and Instruction

Atwell, Nancie. *In the Middle*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1987.

> If you were stuck on a desert island (with 30 students), this is the book you'd want to have...for practical strategies, for philosophy of pedagogy, for personal inspiration. This book may have influenced writing instruction more than any other book on teaching writing, judging by the number of times it's cited in journals and other texts. Teachers of any grade level will benefit from reading this seminal work.

Calkins, Lucy McCormick. *The Art of Teaching Writing*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1986.

> If you get just one new reference book this year, you might want to make it this one. It's full of practical, down-to-earth advice well-grounded in this excellent teacher's personal experience. Primarily aimed at elementary teachers, but with a nod to middle school, and much wisdom applicable at all levels, right through adult. A book to cherish.

Culham, Ruth and Vicki Spandel. *Picture Books: An Annotated Bibliography for Teaching Writing*. Portland, Oregon: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1996.

> This excellent resource connects reading experiences with writing activities. It contains an annotated bibliography of picture books organized by five of the six traits used in writing assessment: ideas and content, organization, voice, word choice and sentence fluency (a separate listing of picture books that could be used in teaching conventions is not included, although some ideas are presented on how to use picture books to teach conventions). After each listing of books, fun ideas and creative sample lesson plans are included for teaching each of the five represented traits. This resource contains a wealth of teaching strategies.

Graves, Donald H. Writing: *Teachers and Children At Work*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1983.

> The title tells it all. Graves takes us right into the classroom to witness the victories and struggles of teachers and children up close. A master teacher with an easy-on-the-ear style, Graves helps us make the connection between theory and practical experience, as only he can. One of the best.

Hewitt, Geof. *A Portfolio Primer*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1995.

> More than a book about portfolios, this is part case study, part writing instruction text, part biography, part portfolio, part testimonial, and wholly entertaining. When a poet becomes a state bureaucrat (which is Hewitt's history), an interesting perspective results. The detailed table of contents and index make it easy to locate specifics, but you'll find yourself caught up in the narrative, student writings and the many small pieces within the chapters. Read this book and gain from the pioneering work done with portfolios (and writing in general) in Vermont.

King, Laurie and Dennis Stovall. *Classroom Publishing.* Hillsboro, Oregon: Blue Heron Publishing Company, 1992.

A hundred teachers answering the question "How do I see my students through the final step of writing...publishing?" His book is like a one-to-one conversation with dozens of clever but realistic teachers, each having actually tried out the methods that are described. The book's attractive layout makes it easy to read with ample white space for making notes and responding. The teacher who's a novice when it comes to publishing will find inspiration and helpful techniques, and those who have published student work will learn how to polish, refine and diversify their products. This book fills a major void in most teachers' background and training, and it's enjoyable and easy to read as well. With its chapters on how to fund publications, legal issues, and resources for publishing, as well as the multitude of case studies cited, you will definitely find many answers to your questions about publishing. It's like buying a box of courage in the bookstore!

Murray, Donald M. *A Writer Teaches Writing.* (Second edition: A complete revision.) Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985.

Can a reference book on writing read like a novel? If it's written by Donald M. Murray, it can come close. For learning what the writing process is all about, this book is tough to beat. Murray discusses his own writing with a graceful humor and appealing insight. This is a remarkably instructive book so entertaining you can take it along on vacation.

Muschla, Gary Robert. *The Writing Teacher's Book of Lists.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1991.

Useful and user-friendly, this book could even serve as a reference book for students to use on their own. Need general guidelines on playwriting for the gifted student who wants to work independently? Direct her to page 233. Need a mini-lesson on figures of speech? See page 152. This book supports integrated instruction with its word lists related to health, sports, advertising and many others. Also, those using a Writer's Workshop format will be interested in the checklists for various stages in the writing process: prewriting, target audiences, organization, revision, proofreading. Some teachers may find certain activities too brief or simplistic; for example, the "Checklist for Revision" (p. 193) is 20 items long, and half of the items deal with writing conventions, which can be handled more effectively in a separate "editing" step, after the writer has revised for focus, organization, word choice and clarity. However, the lists are helpful in themselves, and the book is easy to use.

Muschla, Gary Robert. *Writing Workshop Survival Kit.* West Nyack, N.Y.: The Center for Applied Research in Education, 1993.

Tidbits and tools are available in this book which is organized according to steps in the writing process, types of writing, and writing mechanics. Like *The Writing Teacher's Book of Lists*, many components are too brief and will require you to supplement with additional examples. However, the materials are ready for reproduction as worksheets or transparencies, and students could refer to the book independently when they need something specific such as a sample letter or guidelines on writing a title for a story. Teachers of writing workshop in grades 4-10 will find this most useful, and those making a transition to writing workshop will use this over and over to plan their lessons.

Perl, Sondra and Nancy Wilson. *Through Teachers' Eyes: Portraits of Writing Teachers At Work*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1986.

Fascinating. You'll see yourself again and again in the successes and failures of real flesh and blood teachers in the classroom who are trying to learn right along with their students. Excellent examples of students' writing at grades 1, 4, 8, and 11. Don't miss this book.

Rief, Linda. *Seeking Diversity: Language Arts with Adolescents*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1992.

An excellent follow-up to Atwell's *In the Middle*. Rief provides usable, concrete examples of methods and activities that apply the philosophy of reading and writing workshop in the classroom. Pieces written by students add liveliness and authenticity, and the helpful appendices can be easily adapted for your classroom, saving you hours of planning time.

Routman, Regie. *Invitations: Changing as Teachers and Learners K-12*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1991. Also, *Transitions: From Literature to Literacy*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Heinemann, 1988.

Both books are treasure troves of resources for teachers, with practical information such as how to construct flip booklets and an actual complete unit on folk/fairy tales for grades 3-6. In addition, there is a wealth of theory steeped in practice, and thoughtful analysis of every aspect of teaching literacy. Above all, teachers will appreciate the enormous quantity of student and teacher samples that illustrate virtually every point. When discussing anecdotal records in the chapter on evaluation, Routman includes a copy of a kindergarten teacher's anecdotal records which were handwritten on mailing labels so they could be pasted on to student records. The bibliographies and booklists for children are also a great help to the classroom teacher. Routman truly lives where theory meets practice!

Spandel, Vicki and Richard Stiggins. *Creating Writers: Linking Assessment and Writing Instruction*. New York: Addison Wesley/Longman, 1990.

You can learn to assess writing analytically—then teach the process to your students. Students, grade 4 on up, who learn assessment skills, learn new ways of thinking about writing, and build skills not only in revising, but in writing first drafts. This book will show you how to integrate writing instruction and writing assessment in useful ways, and empower students as evaluators of their own work.

Spandel, Vicki. *Seeing With New Eyes*. Portland, Oregon: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1996.

Another outstanding resource from Vicki Spandel, this book focuses on teaching and assessing beginning writers at the primary grades, although many of the techniques and suggestions that are included would also be useful to teachers at later grades. This resource is so loaded with material related to fostering student writing, it is impossible to highlight all of its contents. Lots of student work and commentary make this an even more valuable resource! (To order, phone 503-275-9519)

Tierney, Robert J. *Portfolio Assessment in the Reading-Writing Classroom.* Norwood, Maine: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc., 1991.

An easy format to absorb, with key points of each section enumerated in concise summaries. Quite comprehensive without being overly heavy or dry. The detailed and extensive annotated bibliography may be helpful in guiding you to their sources, and the helpful visuals and clear layout make it user-friendly. The section on portfolio conferences is disappointingly brief and general, however.

Yancey, Kathleen Blake, ed. *Portfolios in the Writing Classroom.* Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1992.

A good place to start learning about portfolios, with chapters aimed at age groups ranging up to college level. A department, a faculty, a team, a site council or any other group interested in portfolios might select particular chapters to launch their own discussion or planning of portfolios.

Zinsser, William. *On Writing Well.* (Third edition.) New York: Harper and Row, 1985.

Zinsser practices what he preaches; he writes well. He knows what he's talking about—and he knows how to put things so that you understand and remember. He's bright, witty, knowledgeable—and he breaks through to the heart of what good writing is about. Read bits and pieces of this book aloud to students; you'll entertain and enlighten everyone at the same time. A fine, fine book.

Too new to be reviewed but very likely to be wonderful...

Practical Ideas (for teaching writing as a process).

An edition of this was put out in 1987, containing approximately a hundred brief articles by California teachers, mostly graduates of the Bay Area and other Writing Projects. Each chapter begins with a piece discussing some theory—just enough to provide a context for the practical strategies that follow. The concise, specific strategies project the voices of all of the teachers they represent: sincere, intimate, down-to-earth. You'll never feel (professionally) lonely again! There is a 1996 edition specifically aimed at elementary and middle level; an edition for high school and college teachers will be available soon.

To order, call (916) 445-1260, and specify that you want #1221 for the elementary/ middle level edition or #1222 for the high school/college edition. The cost is $18.00 plus $4.95 for shipping and handling.